

**EXPLORING MOTIVES OF SUBSTANCE ABUSE AMONG
ADOLESCENTS IN LAGOS STATE, NIGERIA**

BY

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**A thesis submitted in fulfilment of the requirement for the
degree of Master of Science in Health Sciences**

**Kulliyyah of Allied Health Sciences
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ABSTRACT

The National Drug Law Enforcement Agency of Nigeria reported in 2021 that 40 % of the youth is engrossed in substance abuse with the age as early as 10 years old. Adolescents that start trying out psychoactive substances are putting their physical, psychological and general health and wellbeing at risk. Recent studies mentioned that substance abuse is seen by adolescents as socially acceptable and a cultural norm. Coupled with their inherent urge to try new things, adolescents are more likely to engage in substance abuse. Most of the available studies have focused on the prevalence and nature of substance abuse and only one study has explored the perception of adolescents towards substance abuse in Kaduna state, Nigeria. Given the widespread prevalence and severity of adolescents' involvement, there is a need to explore deeper into the motives behind substance abuse. The aims of this study are: (a) to identify the common substances that adolescents' abuse, and (b) to discover the motives behind the abuse of substances among adolescents. This qualitative phenomenological study employed a purposive sampling method using the snowball technique. Data was collected using semi structured interview that triangulated with focused group discussion and field observation. Seventeen students were interviewed, and 20 students were present for the focused group discussion. The outcome of these research revealed that the most abused substance among the adolescents is alcohol (n = 17), followed by palm wine (n = 15), codeine (n = 4), marijuana (n = 3), tramadol (n = 2). All adolescents abused multiple substances. Thematic analysis revealed motives such as hedonic pursuits, eudaimonic efforts and ecosystem. Hedonic pursuits consist of subthemes such as curiosity and thrill-seeking. Eudaimonic efforts consist of subthemes such as functional, emotional, and social motives. Finally, ecosystem has subthemes such as accessibility, poverty, tradition, and parental influence. The most common substance abused were similar to previous studies. The thematic findings suggested that the government and educational institutions should engage with psychologist and therapists to improve awareness of parents on substance abuse and design exciting and adventurous intervention programs that are consistent with their motives for substance abuse.

Keywords: Substance Abuse, Motives, Adolescents, Nigeria.

ARABIC ABSTRACT

ملخص البحث

أفادت وكالة إنفاذ قانون المخدرات الوطنية في نيجيريا في عام 2021م أنّ 40٪ من الشباب منخرطون في تعاطي المخدرات منذ سن مبكرة تصل إلى 10 سنوات. المراهقون الذين يبدأون في تجربة المواد المؤثرة على العقل يعرضون صحتهم الجسدية والنفسية والعامة ورفاهيتهم للخطر. ذكرت الدراسات الحديثة أنّ المراهقين ينظرون إلى تعاطي المخدرات على أنه مقبول اجتماعيًا وثقافياً. إلى جانب رغبتهم المتأصلة في تجربة أشياء جديدة، يكون المراهقون أكثر عرضة للانخراط في تعاطي المخدرات. ركزت معظم الدراسات المتاحة على انتشار تعاطي المخدرات وطبيعته، واستكشفت دراسة واحدة فقط تصور المراهقين لتعاطي المخدرات في ولاية كادونا، نيجيريا. ونظرًا للانتشار الواسع وشدة تورط المراهقين، فهناك حاجة إلى استكشاف أعمق للدوافع وراء تعاطي المخدرات. أهداف هذه الدراسة هي: (أ) تحديد المواد الشائعة التي يتعاطاها المراهقون، و(ب) اكتشاف الدوافع وراء تعاطي المخدرات بين المراهقين. استخدمت هذه الدراسة الظاهرية النوعية أسلوب أخذ العينات الهادف باستخدام تقنية كرة الثلج. تمّ جمع البيانات باستخدام مقابلة شبه منظمة تمّ تقسيمها إلى مثلثات مع مناقشة جماعية مركزة وملاحظة ميدانية. تمّت مقابلة سبعة عشر طالبًا،

وكان 20 طالبًا حاضرين لمناقشة المجموعة المركزة. كشفت نتائج هذا البحث أنّ المادة الأكثر إساءة بين المراهقين هي الكحول (ن = 17)، وتليها نبيذ النخيل (ن = 15)، والكودايين (ن = 4)، والماريجوانا (ن = 3)، وترامادول (ن = 2). أساء جميع المراهقين استخدام مواد متعددة. قد اكتشف التحليل الموضوعي عن دوافع، مثل: الملاحظات اللذية، والجهود السعيدة، والنظام البيئي. تتكون الملاحظات اللذية من موضوعات فرعية، مثل: الفضول والبحث عن الإثارة. تتكون الجهود السعيدة من موضوعات فرعية، مثل: الدوافع الوظيفية، والعاطفية، والاجتماعية. أخيرًا، يحتوي النظام البيئي على موضوعات فرعية، مثل: إمكانية الوصول، والفقر، والتقاليد، وتأثير الوالدين. كانت المواد الأكثر إساءة استخدامًا مماثلة للدراسات السابقة. وأشارت النتائج الموضوعية إلى أنّ الحكومة والمؤسسات التعليمية يجب أن تتعاون مع علماء النفس والمعالجين لتحسين وعي الآباء بشأن تعاطي المخدرات وتصميم برامج تدخل مثيرة ومغامرة تتوافق مع دوافعهم لتعاطي المخدرات.

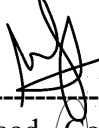
الكلمات المفتاحية: تعاطي المخدرات، الدافع، المراهقون، نيجيريا

APPROVAL PAGE

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DECLARATION

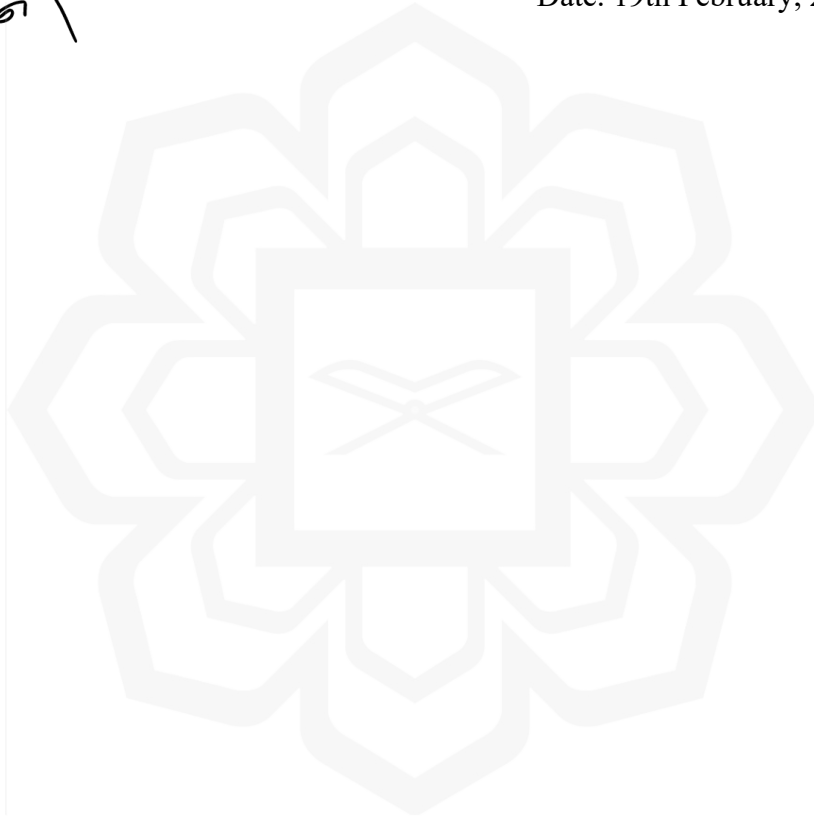
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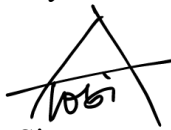
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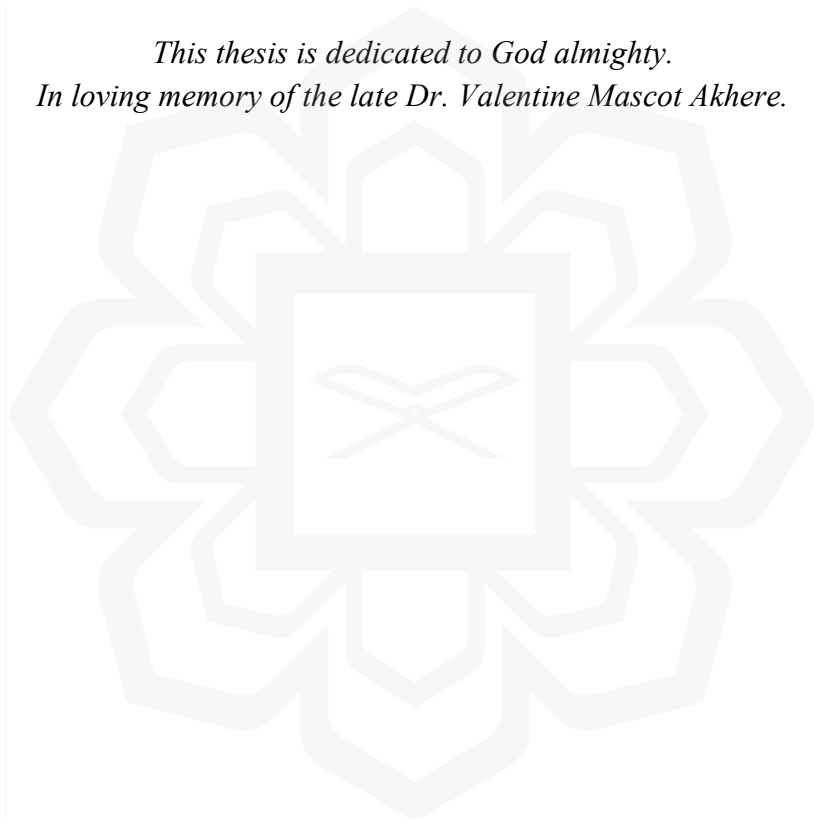
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*This thesis is dedicated to God almighty.
In loving memory of the late Dr. Valentine Mascot Akhere.*



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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

NDLEA: National Drug Law Enforcement Agency

UNODC: United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime



CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

This chapter covers the introduction to the meaning of substance abuse and how it is different from the misuse of drugs. It also discusses the prevalence and impacts of substance abuse in Nigeria. The problem statement points out the rate of substance abuse among the Nigerian adolescents and the reason why there is need for urgent intervention. The concluding parts of this chapter reveals the objectives and significance of this study and the definition of terms used.

1.1 SUBSTANCE ABUSE VS MISUSE

A substance is a compound that changes the physical or mental function of the body, comprising of substances that are natural (e.g., opium, marijuana), semi synthetic (e.g., codeine, morphine) or fully synthetic (e.g., heroin, cocaine) (Musa Yusuf & Salehumar, 2022). Substance abuse is defined as the dangerous or hazardous use of psychoactive substances which includes alcohol and illicit drugs (WHO, 2021). This act in particular is one of the leading causes of various health problems arising among people in the society today. The use of substances must have a harmful effect on the person's mind as evident by the keywords "hazardous" and "psychoactive". Any other substance that is psychoactive but not hazardous, or hazardous towards physical health are not regarded as drug abuse. The constant abuse of these harmful substances results in addiction or dependence. Substance addiction is defined as the compulsive untamed desire to consume drugs (Baconi et al., 2015) and substance dependence is defined as the physical characteristics present during the consumption and abstinence of drugs (Pachpande & Patil 2023).

The present situation concerning substance abuse in Nigeria is high. The world drug report by United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) revealed that about 14.3 million of the population are abusing substances and most especially among adolescents (UNODC, 2018). Furthermore, the National Drug Law Enforcement Agency of Nigeria

reported in 2021 that 40 % of the Nigerian youth is engrossed in substance abuse with the age as early as 10 years old. Adolescents that start trying out psychoactive substances are putting their physical, psychological, and general health and wellbeing at risk. Onaolapo et al., (2022) mentioned that substance abuse is seen by Nigerian adolescents as socially acceptable and a cultural norm due to sociocultural, economic, and environmental factors. Coupled with their inherent urge to try new things, adolescents are more likely to engage in substance abuse (Otorokpa, 2019).

Another related terminology is drug misuse which is specific to the medically prescribed drug. Drug misuse “occurs when drugs are taken without prescription, when it is overdosed, self-medicated or taken for the wrong condition” (Al-Worafi, 2020). All of this comes down to the reason for which the drug is being taken or the quantity taken to determine misuse. Prescription drugs always come with instructions on how it should be used and the quantity to be used. In other words, drug misuse can occur when an individual consumes the medication for reasons that are inaccurate to the instructions of use provided in any legal medication.

A lot of people all over the world are guilty of this because many people take drugs without knowing the nature of their illness. Some people abuse drugs to imitate other people that have taken it and it worked for them. The misuse of prescription drugs is related to acquiring these drugs without any prescription from a medical practitioner. It is also being administered most times for motives or reasons that are not medically related. Be it misuse or abuse of drugs, both cases can be life-threatening. Painkillers/pain relief drugs, cough syrups and sedatives are some common misused drugs, these drugs are found not to be only misused, but some people also abuse it.

1.2 STATISTICS OF SUBSTANCE ABUSE IN NIGERIA

The present situation concerning substance abuse in Nigeria is high as the world drug report by the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) revealed in 2018 that about 14.3

million of the population are abusing substances and about 3 million of those abusers are suffering from ailments related to substance abuse or substance use. In this same report, it is stated that the specific use and abuse of cannabis has increased greatly and most especially among the adolescents who overlooked the adverse effect of this substance. Within the span of nine years, the population of substance abusers has skyrocketed by 22% globally (UNODC, 2018).

Furthermore, the NDLEA of Nigeria reported in 2021 that 40 % of the youth population in Nigeria is engrossed in the web of substance abuse. In the year 2022, there were reports of 12,000 drug users who passed through a series of treatment, rehabilitation, and counselling within the span of 20 months in Nigeria (Ezigbo, 2022). The high proportion of youths involved in substance abuse and the age ranging from as early as 10 years old should be an urgent concern to the future of Nigeria as a community and as a country.

With all of the above reports, there is a clear indication that the problem of substance abuse in Nigeria is becoming a bigger menace that requires all hands on deck to fight against it. The NDLEA further revealed that the commonly abused drugs in Nigeria are cannabis, cocaine, methamphetamine, alcohol, cough syrup with codeine, gasoline, aerosols, opium, heroin, morphine, and amphetamine (UNODC, 2018). All these drugs are harmful and have very bad effects on the body. Moreover, some of these drugs are prescribed or over the counter drugs (example is tramadol). These drugs tend to be gateway drugs for some substance abuser until they are full-blown substance abusers. Most of these people do not even perceive drugs as something that is bad, care less about the dangers that could emanate from the use of these drugs and fixated on the pleasurable feeling it gives them when they use it (Ezigbo, 2022).

1.3 IMPACT OF SUBSTANCE ABUSE

The abuse of drugs or substance can be of medical or social origin, with excessive usage, and leads to maladaptive and addictive behaviour patterns that usually has a negative impact on the physical, psychological and social health. There is also a direct and indirect consequence of

substance abuse on the community and the nation as a whole. Impact of substance abuse is heavier on adolescents because they are the ones that are referred to as the future.

Adolescents that start trying out psychoactive substances are putting their physical, psychological and general health and wellbeing at risk. This is so because the brain of the adolescent is extremely sensitive to being altered by these drugs and overburden the output system of the brain (Winters & Arria, 2011). Substance abuse is related to the decline in general body health or damage of some vital internal organs such as the lungs, kidney, and liver. For example, marijuana has a long-term effect on the brain of teenagers due to alteration by the toxin towards their developing brain. As stated earlier by Jacobus & Tapert, (2015) marijuana affects the macro- and micro-structural development of adolescent brain, especially affecting the white matter of the brain, producing a reduction in attention, memory, and processing speed. This effect becomes more prominent with concomitant use of other substance abuse such as alcohol.

Alcohol, the most commonly abused substance, affects the liver and brain. The liver cells will be damaged during the process of detoxification of ethanol, a psychoactive ingredient of alcohol. Persistent damage may lead to accumulation of fat in the liver (steatosis) and permanent widespread scarring of the liver (cirrhosis) (Osna et al., 2017). Some people who get drunk with alcohol may also suffer from injuries sustained from falling or motor vehicle accidents due to poor concentration and ability to perform simple and complex actions. Cocaine causes seizures, heart attack and stroke, ecstasy puts the liver and heart at risk of failure, abusers of marijuana risks of memory loss, psychosis, depression which can result in suicide, opioids can cause respiratory distress or death caused by overdose (Osna et al., 2017).

Adolescents who use substances, on the other hand, will start to experience poor concentration and poor ability to learn which will negatively impact their school performance or put pressure on their brain. Adolescents who are struggling academically are prone to stress, anxiety, feeling of being a failure due to their academic challenges (Bugbee et al., 2019). Some of them may feel hopeless and may develop low self-esteem and the feeling of defeat which increases their vulnerability to the abuse of substances. That being said, it is important to also

note that high performing students can also be prone to the abuse of substances in order to stay on top of the class and maintain their good reputation (Arria et al., 2013). The consistent ambition to succeed academically can cause tension, stress, and anxiety which might lead them to abuse substances as a way to help them relax and improve their performance. Abuse of drugs has also been related to mental disorders, depression, withdrawal from family members, heart attack, loss of appetite, failure in academics, sexually transmitted disease, and some other incurable diseases (Arria et al., 2013).

The general impact of substance abuse as listed by Khalsa et al., (2008) includes brain damage as a result of the drugs or accidents which occurred while under the influence of the drugs, liver damage, kidney damage, lungs or heart damage can occur from the effects of the drugs. Blood transmitted diseases can occur through sharing of needles for injecting drugs. Psychological impacts of substance abuse among adolescents are anxiety, psychosis, depression, untimely death, insomnia, suicidal thoughts. Social impacts of substance abuse on the society and the people around includes high rate of criminal activities among substance abusers like armed robbery, crime, failure at school, prostitution, stealing and death.

1.4 PROBLEM STATEMENT

The trend of substance abuse among adolescents in Nigeria is increasing. A report by United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) has revealed more than a fourth of Nigerian abuse drugs with the average age of 19 years old. This suggests that a significant portion of substance abusers were adolescents. More alarmingly was the fact a majority abused more than one drug simultaneously (UNODC, 2018). Local authorities have previously confirmed the involvement of adolescents in substance abuse and their prevalence is increasing according to a recent poll (NOI Polls, 2018). Independent studies by Onaolapo et al. (2022) have reported a rate of substance abuse at 21.7 % to 57% across different substances and Bassi et al. (2017) reported 21% of adolescents are abusers and started as early as five years old. These findings suggest the severity of adolescent's involvement in substance abuse among the Nigerian population seems widespread and severe.

Onaolapo et al. (2022) also exposes the introduction of drugs to adolescents through gateway drugs. Especially in Nigeria, substances like palm wine, kolanuts, and alcohol are common in many households. Some of these adolescents are not aware that they are taking psychoactive substances. This was probable as some of the drugs have been reconstituted into daily edibles such as chocolate bars and snacks. Both studies by Dumbili et al. (2021) and Onaolapo et al. (2022) reaffirmed that adolescents start to make combinations or cocktails of substances and give it street names. Some of these drugs are made into a fine blend and mixed with chocolate powders to make energy bars, delicious cookies or mixed in children drinks for innocent and unsuspecting buyers or friends. This trend increases the potential of unintentional abuse and subsequently leads to dependency. Obiechina & Isiguzo (2016) outlined the trend of mixing substances for abuse is usually a combination of illegal drugs, medication, and natural intoxicants. The choice of medication may include those available for purchase as over the counter medicine or those that require prescription. Natural intoxicants may involve culturally acceptable substances, or any substances not culturally consumed such as animal excretions.

Substance abuse is normally perceived as a hedonistic attempt for pleasure (Kennett et al., 2013). People are seen to engage in wilful behaviour of substance abuse that is motivated by the pleasure derived from it. However, research has suggested that a more naive or natural purpose may be present as the underlying motive to substance abuse. Dumbili & Odeigah (2023) reported the widespread misuse of tramadol, codeine and other new psychoactive substances which are mixture of different substances among the Nigerian population. This is very common among the youths and adolescents in urban areas, and it is gradually spreading to the rural communities. Bassi et al. (2017) earlier revealed that most substance abusers do not see it as a problem because they are taking it to improve their agility, help with relaxing or to improve performance. This research was carried out among secondary school adolescents in Kaduna state, one of the northern states in Nigeria (Bassi et al., 2017).

Alternatively, Onaolapo et al. (2022) mentioned that the youths and adolescents are prone to substance use due to their exposure to contributing factors such as unemployment, and social pressure. Other than the possible absence of awareness or denial in their perception, there were reports that substance abuse occurs for socially acceptable causes due to the recreational

use of substances in certain Nigerian communities. The study called for elaborate research on substance abuse among adolescents, and stronger policies to control the use of substances. The study further showed that abuse is seen as a socially acceptable and cultural norm. This perception has perhaps contributed to the high prevalence of substance abuse in the population, regardless of age group. Adolescents seem to seek novel experiences and they may underestimate the risks that are associated with the abuse of substances. This exploratory behaviour coupled with peer influence and other socioeconomic factors can influence them to abuse substance (Otokpa, 2019).

In all, it seems probable that there are underlying motives towards abusing drugs other than the hedonistic reasons. There was a lack of study in exploring these motives behind substance abuse among adolescents. Possible motives may include factors on a psychological or social dimension that is seen as valuable to the life of adolescence. Substance abuse may also be a manifestation of a negative coping mechanism to the challenges in an adolescent's life. This is suggestive considering the various challenges an adolescent faced to meet their psychosocial development needs and the scarce resources available to them.

1.5 RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

The main objectives of this research are:

1. To identify the common substances that adolescents abuse and how they obtain the substance.
2. To explore the motives of substance abuse among adolescents in Nigeria.

1.6 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

This study aimed to answer these research questions:

1. What are the common substances abused by adolescents in Nigeria and how do they obtain it?
2. What are the motives of substance abuse among adolescents in Nigeria?

1.7 SIGNIFICANCE OF RESEARCH

This study allows the exploration of meaning towards substance abuse for the adolescent. The usual assumption of a hedonistic purpose can be challenged and revisited. Literature reviews have suggested that the initial phase of substance abuse may have a naiver or socially acceptable purpose. It is only when the abuser achieves dependency that this act of abuse becomes purely hedonistic.

Additionally, the finding of this will guide various stakeholders to design an intervention that is appropriate and hopefully effective in curbing the desire. Several research on health behavioural changes have outlined the importance of a tailored and targeted approach to intervention. Humans are more likely to change their behaviour when they see the value of that change is substantial to their life.

Future interventions can be created to be appropriate to the developmental milestones of the adolescents. The interventions can either address the paucity of the previous developmental stage or provide optimum guidance to fulfil current developmental milestones. Adolescents may also be more attracted to the interventions due to its approach that derived from fellow adolescents.

1.8 DEFINITION OF TERMS

There were several terminologies that are related to substance abuse and the context of this study. These ranges from terminologies from academic or authoritative literatures and several terminologies unique to the sociocultural context of Nigeria. The theoretical definition was listed for each terminology.

1.8.1 Adolescent

Adolescent is defined as a young person in the process of developing from childhood to adulthood and are within the ages of 10 - 19 years old. (World Health Organisation, 2017).

1.8.2 Addiction

Addiction is defined as a chronic disease that affects a person's brain and changes their behaviour in a way that harms them. It makes the person develop a strong physical or psychological need for something or to use something. (World Health Organisation, 2019).

1.8.3 Dependence

Dependence is a state whereby a person relies on one or more substances in order for them to function effectively and absence of it may cause symptoms of withdrawal (Veronica Zambon, 2021).

1.8.4 Substance

Substance is a psychoactive compound which may be legal, illegal or controlled for licensed use that affect human health, create social challenges, and cause addiction (McLellan, 2017). These substances may range from natural occurring substances, medications or illegal drugs. Natural substances were used commonly within the Nigerian culture.

1.8.5 Misuse

Misuse is the act of using medication in a way that does not conform to the instructions and purpose (Adam Rowden, 2023).

1.8.6 Gateway Substance

Gateway substance is a drug or substance which may be legal or not that leads the user to the usage of more addictive or dangerous substances (Miller & Hurd, 2017).

1.8.7 Psychoactive Substance

Psychoactive substance is any substance that affects the mental faculty (how the brain, mood, thoughts, feelings, awareness or behaviour) of the user when it is administered into the body (World Health Organisation (2024)).

1.8.8 Kolanut

Kolanut is the bitter seed of a tree which contains high caffeine (Adelusi et al., 2020).

1.8.9 Palm Wine

Palm wine is a traditional white effervescent alcoholic beverage which is popularly produced in Africa from the fermented sap of oil palm tree (Onyeukwu et al., 2024).



CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEWS

This literature review focuses on the psychosocial development of adolescents, and their life challenges which could be contributing motives for substance abuse. The life challenges guided the summary of previous research on motives of substance abuse, by prioritizing research among adolescents but including youths as well. It also discusses the stages of substance abuse and the theoretical framework of the study. This literature review chapter is aimed at revealing valuable information about the underlying motives of substance abuse, and the factors that can contribute to this act among the Nigerian adolescents.

2.1 PSYCHOSOCIAL DEVELOPMENT OF ADOLESCENT

Psychosocial development refers to the development of the emotions, intellect, cognitive and social skills of individuals and how they are able to operate them all through their lifetime (Orenstein & Lewis, 2022). Every individual experience psychosocial growth. During the various stages of psychosocial growth, some psychosocial crises may occur due to maldevelopment, and this may have a negative or positive effect on an individual's development. The success attained at the end of each stage produces an individual who is healthy psychosocially.

The first stage of development (infant stage) is the stage of trust and mistrust, starting from birth to the age of one year old. At this stage, the virtue of hope that basic needs will be provided is built. Successful completion of this stage means that the child will have trust in the parents or guardian. Unsuccessful completion will lead to maldevelopment. This can be carried over to the adolescent stage and will manifest in the adolescent by developing a sense of mistrust to their parent, guardian or caregiver. Adolescents who have had this experience could grow up to develop difficulties in forming relationships, trusting others, making friends, and opening up to their family members because the foundation of sense and trust was not fully established during the infant stage.

The second stage of psychosocial development is the stage of autonomy versus doubt or shame which is between the ages of one to three years old (Kendra Cherry, 2024). Autonomy refers to an individual's ability to control the way they act or what they believe in. At this stage, the child can perform simple tasks within their milestones independently and will always feel safe in the company of their parents or guardians. Successful completion will lead to self-determination and freedom which is equal to autonomy. Otherwise, maldevelopment may cause doubt on their safety, self-confidence, and abilities if a child is often being controlled or criticized. This may manifest in an adolescent as they may develop the fear of making mistakes which eventually pushes them to make more mistakes.

The third stage is the stage of initiative and guilt. This stage occurs within the ages of three years to five years (Kendra Cherry, 2024). There is a need for proper balancing of both initiative and guilt so that the child will be able to follow their conscience. The child also becomes more inquisitive about their purpose at this stage and requires an adequate answer. The successful completion of this stage will cause the child to develop a sense of inventiveness and the eagerness to do things which is equal to initiative. Failure in this stage can result in the maldevelopment of the feeling of guilt. Instead of the child developing confidence and a healthy sense of initiative, he/she will develop the fear of making decisions, and struggle with the feeling of guilt even when they do what is right. This affects adolescents' creativity and initiative.

The fourth stage is the stage of industrious vs inferiority of a child. It occurs between the ages of seven to 11 years old (Orenstein & Lewis, 2022). The child learns to navigate the different stages of emotional skills which assists him/her to develop their self confidence in various aspects of life. The child will also engage in different types of activities to develop their skills and requires encouragement from their parents. Successful completion of this stage will develop their sense of industriousness or otherwise will lead them to feel inferior. For instance, a child who is being constantly talked down on for their poor academic performance or unfavourably compared to their peers will develop a sense of inferiority. The manifestation of this maldevelopment in adolescents is low self-esteem, reluctance to take new responsibilities, and fear of failure.

The fifth stage is the beginning stage of adolescence between the ages of 12 years to 18 years old (Orenstein & Lewis, 2022). This is the stage of identity development which is the most delicate stage of any child's life. The adolescent child at this stage will begin to get concerned about the thoughts of others towards him/her. They get confused about who they are and how they should behave. Therefore, they can be easily manipulated to do things that they should not do. They navigate their own identity with a question of who they are, who they are supposed to be, how they should think or how they should react. They may also carry out different experiments with their bodies at this stage to assume different identity. Successful completion of this stage will lead to a clear sense of identity. The failure to establish a clear sense of identity will make a person confused about their role in the society which can lead to instability in relationships and career choices. This confusion will manifest in various ways like struggling with personal values and developing uncertainty about their existence and life goals.

The last three stages of psychosocial development in the life of an individual are intimacy vs isolation, generativity vs stagnation and integrity vs despair. These stages begin at the age of 19 years (Kendra Cherry, 2024). Intimacy vs isolation is the stage when a person decides on who to be intimate, bond and maintain a relationship with. The success in this stage will give the person the ability to connect meaningfully with another person while failure at this stage will lead to isolation. Unsuccessful completion can result in different types of misbehaviours or character malfunction related to relationship. The seventh stage is generativity vs stagnation stage which occurs at the ages 40 years to 60 years old. Individuals at this stage will do their best to create what will last them their lifetime. They will also begin to weigh their impact in life so far and reflect on how far they have gone. If they are satisfied with their productiveness so far, they will be proud of themselves and even want to be more positively impactful in life. The eighth stage, the stage of integrity vs despair begins at age 65 years. The individuals at this stage are full of regret over the life they have lived if they have not achieved anything meaningful.

These psychosocial stages of development provide insight into the underlying motives for substance abuse in adolescents. Adolescents may use substances to cope with the feelings of insecurity or anxiety which was developed in the first stage. The use of substance may be a

way of asserting independence or escaping from the feeling of inadequacy in adolescent who do not successfully complete the second stage of development. Adolescents may also start using substances in order to seek approval from peers or cope with guilt if they do not have a good sense of initiative. Adolescents who developed the feeling of inferiority may take substances to make them fit perfectly in the society and among their peers or to enhance their performance. The use of substance may be a way for them to explore their identity or cope with life crises, loneliness and regret. Understanding the specific motives related to each developmental stage according to Eiden et al (2016) allows for designing an effective intervention which addresses the root cause of substance abuse. Interventions which consist of psychological, social, and emotional support to address the nature of the abuse should be introduced into the society. In addition, programs that empower adolescents with coping skills can help them navigate through their developmental challenges. This is further shown in the table below.

Table 2.1: Success, Maldevelopment, and possible Intervention by Developmental Stages

	Stage	Successful Completion	Maldevelopment	Possible Intervention
1	Trust vs Mistrust	Sense of security	Mistrust Anxiety Insecurity	Build trust and secure relationship through treatment.
2	Autonomy vs Shame and Doubt	Sense of autonomy	Lack of confidence Independence	Empowering individuals to make choices and fostering self- efficacy to reduce or curb the reliance of substances.
3	Initiative vs Guilt	Sense of initiative	Guilt	Encouraging a creative expression and healthy way of risk taking.
4	Industry vs Inferiority	Sense of competence	Low self esteem	Fostering sense of competence via skill building activities.
5	Identity vs Role Confusion	Strong and clear identity	Confusion Uncertainty about life choices	Providing identity exploration opportunities and support.
6	Intimacy vs Isolation	Strong relationships	Isolation Loneliness	Promoting social connections and healthy relationships
7	Generativity vs Stagnation	Feeling of usefulness	Stagnation Unfulfillment	Encouraging community involvement and generative activities.
8	Integrity vs Despair	Sense of fulfilment and integrity	Regret Dissatisfaction Bitterness	Facilitating life review and acceptance.

2.2 LIFE CHALLENGES OF ADOLESCENT IN NIGERIA

2.2.1 Physiological Challenges

The general challenges that every Nigerian adolescent faces on a daily basis may vary based on their economic and social status which affect their mental health. Some families are struggling to survive and raise their children. As at 2019, a total percentage of 50.1 Nigerians are living in abject poverty (World Bank, 2020). People in this category of poverty will have little or nothing to take care of their children. Poverty is also a restriction to quality education (UNICEF, 2022). With poverty being a significant barrier, a lot of Nigerian children are school dropout because their guardians are not able to fund their education. Children who grow up in poverty experience stress and trauma which can affect their mental health and make them develop the feeling of hopelessness and low self-esteem (Egba & Okey, 2022).

Malnutrition is a critical issue which affect the children in this category. They do not have enough access to the basic needs of life. This leads to severe health, developmental, and educational setbacks. Protein deficiency is one of the problems that is being encountered due to the high rate of poverty in the country. Most people are unable to provide food that are rich in protein or balanced diet for their family (De Vries-Ten Have et al., 2020). With poverty being the major cause of malnutrition, children who suffer malnutrition are more likely to experience social stigma and low self-esteem. Poverty and malnutrition create an environment that increases the vulnerability to risky behaviours which includes substance abuse. Malnutrition during adolescence can lead to brain impairment and can affect cognitive functions (Vaughn et al., 2016). The failure of the government to provide adequate social services and economic opportunities has perpetuated the cycle of poverty and crime (Adegbami & Uche, 2016). The corruption and mismanagement of resources by the government officials and political leaders in Nigeria has left a lot of youths and adolescents without hope for a better future. This has led them to engage in abusing substances to escape from their reality.

2.2.2 Safety Challenges

The state of poverty has also led to the high rate of crime in Nigeria at large. The rate of unemployment is high and has led a lot of the Nigerian citizens into dubious activities to make ends meet. Various kinds of crime are going on such as fraud, substance trafficking, armed robbery, murder, human trafficking and cultism (Opeyemi Oyelade, 2019). The safety of children all over the world is of utmost importance because children are the leaders of tomorrow. Yet the state of security and safety of Nigerian adolescents is questionable. Bello (2022) in his study revealed that since 2014, more than 1,600 children have been abducted in northern Nigeria. Furthermore, kidnapping for ransom has become a business for some people due to desperation and poverty. There is a lot of killings and insecurity of the poor and innocent in the country.

In addition to this, there have been various instances of disturbing news of violations against children, some of which have led to death of children in different parts of Nigeria (O'Connor et al., 2021). The prevalence of various crimes in Nigeria, including armed robbery, advance fee fraud, obtaining money under false pretence, burglary, attempted murder, murder, manslaughter, public disturbances, sexual assault, rape, kidnapping, forgery, impersonation, child trafficking, oil theft, and the emerging crime of "baby-making factories," has positioned Nigeria as one of the countries with a high crime rate (Nwakanma & Igbe, 2020). The mention of "baby-making factories" indicates a particularly alarming trend in human trafficking and exploitation.

Haladu (2023) revealed that so many Nigerian youths have turned to start abusing substances due to frustration, disappointments and various forms of problems. Many young boys and girls who have been abandoned by their own parents are abusing substances because the substances make helps them to forget their sorrows and pains. This only makes it evident that fear, anxiety and stress can be linked to substance abuse among adolescents (Meghdadpour et al., 2015). In addition to this, Lagos state, Nigeria happens to be one among the top five states in Nigeria with a high number of substance abusers. Some children have lost their parents due to the insecurity and terrorism going on in the country and have no parents to protect and guide them.

2.2.3 Social Challenges

A lot of parents in Nigeria are too occupied with work and ensuring adequate resources at home. As a consequence, they neglect the care, love, and support that their children need from them which have been shown to cause depression for children, especially adolescents (Han & Miller, 2009). This issue of neglect in particular has made a lot of children victims of deadly situations. Aloba et al. (2020) revealed that about 48% of Nigerian adolescents experience abuse and neglect of various form ranging from physical, emotional, and sexual. Neglect by parents predisposes the child to associate with the wrong group of people. Even if the child is with those that the parents regard as the right company, the child still needs the proper monitoring and guidance of a grown up. Different forms of physical abuse, maltreatment, emotional abuse and sexual abuse either by peers, family members, relatives, guardians or parents have also been a problem to children in some parts of Nigeria (Whitesell et al., 2013).

Research by Meghdadpour et al. (2015) indicates that children who live in environments where illegal substances are prevalent will be more prone to emotional and physical neglect and abuse. Adolescents who experience neglect will develop high level of emotional distress, anxiety and depression. These emotional challenges have been linked to many adolescents turning to abuse substances as their means of coping with their negative reality. Substance abuse among adolescents can be significantly influenced by experiences of maltreatment and physical abuse.

The relationship between adverse childhood experiences and substance abuse is complex. Oftentimes, it involves the emotional, psychological, and social wellbeing of the individual involved (Snyder & Smith, 2014). An adolescent who has experienced maltreatment, emotional abuse, and physical abuse are at a higher risk for developing depression, characterized by feelings of worthlessness and hopelessness. They will believe that the use of substances can provide relief from depressive symptoms but often exacerbates the problem, creating a damaging cycle for youths.

2.2.4. Esteem Challenges

Self-esteem is a multifaceted construct that plays a crucial role in psychological well-being. It involves two primary components: the cognitive aspect, which includes beliefs and thoughts about oneself, and the emotional aspect, which encompasses feelings such as pride, shame, and satisfaction (Muris & Otgaar, 2023). It encompasses both positive and negative evaluations of oneself, influencing how one interacts with others and navigates life's challenges. Self-esteem challenges have been linked to various forms of problems faced by adolescents. It will be extremely difficult for adolescents who do not have a strong support system to be able to overcome low self-esteem.

Some of the problems that are being encountered by adolescents are related to academic performance, juvenile delinquency, and psychological depression (Masselink et al., 2018). Some students get worried that they may not be doing well in their studies and yet their parents or guardian do not provide any words of encouragement or motivation to them (Choe, 2020). This will humiliate or discourage the children in this situation and bring about low self-esteem. Supportive parents are often more involved in their children's education. This involvement can take various forms, such as helping with homework, attending school events, and communicating with teachers. Research by Choe (2020) showed that parental involvement is positively correlated with academic success. Adolescents who perceive their parents as engaged in their education tend to have higher academic motivation and performance.

Lots of adolescents look forward to substance abuse due to low self-esteem triggered by their friends (Uba et al., 2013). Adolescents are highly influenced by the behaviour and attitudes of their peers. If the use of substances is being normalised within a group of friends, adolescents may be pressurized to take up this behaviour to gain acceptance. This effect is more prominent due to the process of developing identity for the adolescent. Often, adolescents confuse self-identity to social identity which leads them to conform to group behaviours. This can be a positive or negative effect of assuming social identity depending on the quality of the group that they belong to. Unfortunately, the prevalence of substance abuse among Nigerian adolescents were high thus the chance of a negative effect increases.

Low self-esteem has also been linked to the number of children being raised in a particular family. Low self-esteem was found to be prominent in large family and polygamous

homes (Khajehdaluee et al., 2013). Children raised in polygamous families often struggle with lower self-esteem compared to their peers from monogamous homes due to step sibling dynamics, emotional distress, and educational attainment (Al-Sharfi et al., 2015). The presence of multiple siblings from different mothers can complicate the sibling bond and relationships. The children in such homes will experience rivalry and competition for resources which will lead to conflicts among siblings and affect their emotional well-being. These children may receive less support for their academic endeavours which will create a hindrance to their performance in school. The divided attention from parents and potential conflicts among siblings and parents can cause instability in the home which will lead to the feelings of insecurity, distress and impaired mental health. In all, these can increase the risk of substance abuse among adolescents.

Adolescents with self-esteem issues may engage in behaviours that aim to improve their self-esteem. Adolescents with low self-esteem often feel inadequate, unworthy and socially isolated in some cases. These sense of hopelessness and lack of motivation makes it more difficult for them to be positive about themselves. This will be especially vulnerable to substance abuse when their self-esteem hinges upon social status and acceptance. The initial use of substances may provide a temporary relief or sense of belonging to enhance their behaviour. However, this relief is short term and will lead to an increased reliance on substance.

2.3 COMMON MOTIVES FOR SUBSTANCE ABUSE

2.3.1 Socio-Cultural Motives

The use of alcoholic drink has been of great importance to various ethnic groups in Nigeria (for libations and prayers) due to the socio-cultural beliefs and traditions of the people. For Nigerians, alcohol is mostly consumed during traditional rituals, marriage ceremony, and funerals (Nwagu et al., 2017). In the cause of these events, palm wine which is the fermented sap from the oil palm tree (Nneamaka, 2019), beer and many types of alcoholic drinks are being used and served to guests. This plays a vital role in fostering relationships and celebrating communal ties. This makes it evident that the socio-cultural belief of the Nigerian people is one of the driving forces behind the use and risk of abuse of substances.

The availability and diversity of the various kinds of substances in Nigeria is high. There is no limit to who can purchase it hence why it is easy for some minors to purchase it. Study by Dumbili et al. (2021) made revelations about the sales of tramadol and codeine over the counter to individuals without prescription. Furthermore, there was an increasing trend of new psychoactive substances which includes synthetic drugs that has the same effect as traditional drugs being sold in informal markets. The lack of regulations allows minors to access these substances easily. Many Nigerians use herbal mixtures which contains psychoactive components and are harmful to human health. In fact, Ibraheem & Adigun (2018) makes mention of various brands of alcoholic bitters which Nigerians are abusing and led to an increase in the production and purchase of these psychoactive products. Some teenagers are being sent by elders (relatives or even parents) to purchase these substances, and this has contributed to normalising the substance in the society.

Lack of proper parenting is one of the many causes of substance abuse among adolescents (Akinnuoye et al., 2014). Many parents today are concerned with making ends meet and neglect their parental duties to their children. This worsens as many children are raised by single parent. When a parent is preoccupied with the financial struggles and responsibilities of raising a child or children alone, they may unknowingly neglect their parenting duties. This can cause increased vulnerability in adolescents to engage in substance abuse. Some teenagers also start taking drugs to get away from the reality of the problems or trauma they encounter at home. The family has an important role to play in the life of every child because it is the first institution the children first find themselves. A problematic family will lack good communication, good social support, harmony and parental attachment which are some of the vital requirements that make a healthy and substance free child (Ode et al., 2020).

2.3.2 Psychosocial Motives

Puberty causes teenagers to feel different with the physical and psychological changes that they experience. This feeling makes them desire to be loved and accepted. The late childhood and

early adolescent stage also come with some unexplainable pressure. All these things can predispose them to consider taking psychoactive substances. Some friends even suggests that they will feel better once they start taking drugs (Akinnuoye et al., 2014). Nevertheless, some adolescents try out substances just because they want to know how it feels to take it or what it feels like to be under the influence of these substances, they just want to experience that feeling.

The lack of role model in the family led adolescents to admire bold and fearless criminals in their locality (Soares et al., 2020). Adolescents believed the desired characteristics is due to substance use. Hence, adolescents resorted to substance use to develop such characteristics. A lot of teenagers also start abusing substances because they are shy to talk to the opposite sex or scared to communicate among their peers in public (Olowe & Adeolu, 2022). These problems are common for adolescents as part of their development experience. The time, love and the encouragement they get from the right people can assist them to overcome it.

A lot of youths today that are taking psychoactive substances were introduced by their friends and relatives (Lumun & Joshua, 2022). Teenagers are prone to trying out substances because they spend more time in the company of their peers or friends. Often, peers or friends recommended substances for addressing anxiety, giving them the courage to talk to someone they love, or giving them the feeling of strength and courage. The encouragement from friends to abuse substances cannot be overlooked because the influence that adolescents have on each other is great (Mohasoa, 2010).

The availability of substances almost everywhere in the streets of Lagos is alarming. Apart from local street vendors, there are also hawkers who sell various herbal psychoactive substances. Some of these abusers have also found a way to have the feeling they derive from the substance which they abuse by using other substances which possesses psychoactive qualities. Adolescents now abuse cough syrups, tramadol and even go as far as smoking dried animal dung (Salubuyi et al., 2022). This has been going on for far too long that most of these adolescents grow up to become adults who are attached to the feelings they derive from psychoactive substances.

There have also reports of the nonmedical use of stimulants among students and these are illegally available for them even within college premises by illegal sellers. These stimulants were usually bought by students who have academic challenges (Arria & Dupont, 2010). Study showed that many students reported knowing peers who misuse stimulants and a significant number of them have access to these drugs without prescription. Approximately 7.5% of adolescents reported the nonmedical use of prescription stimulants used in the treatment of ADHD for academic enhancement (Teter et al. 2020). Many of these adolescents believed that these medications can help them to study better and perform well in their studies. However, they reported lower academic performance compared to their peers who did not use the stimulants. This suggests that the drug did not yield the intended benefits even though it is being used for academic enhancement.

Studies have revealed that adolescents who have experienced any form of maltreatment or abuse are prone to the use and abuse of substances (Whitesell et al., 2013). Most of the times, the males are being physically abused while the females are being sexually assaulted. Child maltreatment is one of the most stressful challenges that affects adolescents psychologically (Aytur et al., 2022). There have been records of children who experience abuse and developed acute substance use disorder (Nwagu, 2016). Abuse of children during childhood to the adolescence stage allows a thought that makes such children see themselves as failures. Such children may also develop psychological rules which affects their distinctness, identification, peer influence relationships, and their adaptability to the learning environment (Cicchetti & Handley, 2019).

2.3.3 Functional Motives

Substances containing caffeine like coffee and kolanut were taken by some teenage students because it helps them stay awake for a longer period at night to study (Akinuoye et al., 2014). It also makes them very active all through that period. Manyike et al. (2016) makes an affirmation to this claim that kolanut is the most abused substance among adolescents because it helps them to stay awake. They consume it from time to time to increase their time of wakefulness. Kolanut, which is a fruit from the kola tree is extremely dangerous to consume in

high quantity due to its high level of caffeine (Adebusola Adelusi et al., 2020). Alternatively, many students have been deceived into abusing prescription stimulants (Arria & Dupont, 2010). Prescription stimulants is claimed will help them perform better in their academics. Some even refer to it as ‘smart drugs’. Some of these medications which are abused for academic purposes are Adderall (amphetamine), Ritalin (methylphenidate), Concerta (extended-release methylphenidate), and Dexedrine (dextroamphetamine). The competitive nature of students to be the best academically often motivates them to seek means to help improve their academic performance. These adolescents believe that stimulants can help them to study longer or improve their cognitive function contributes to the regular use of these substances. This leads to dependency, creating a habit that is more difficult to stop.

Some adolescent athletes have been found using substances in order for them to perform better in their sporting activities (McDuff & Baron, 2005). Some of these substances increases their strength, relieves them of their pains, helps them to recover fast from injury or enables them to lose weight (McDuff & Baron, 2005). Many young athletes resort to various substances to gain competitive edge in their sporting activities. There are recreational substances like alcohol, cannabis and tobacco used for relaxation, pain relief, and as a stimulant. There are as well ergogenic substances like Anabolic-androgenic steroids used to build muscle mass and increase strength, prescription medications like opioids for pain management and stimulants to enhance energy and focus (McDuff et al., 2019). Central nervous system stimulants which are capable of increasing brain activity, enhance alertness can increase metabolism in the body, and suppress appetite are used by athletes (Avois et al., 2006). This leads to quick burning of calorie and suppresses their appetite which is the key to weight loss. However, these substances do more harm than good to the body. The abusers are at risk of cardiovascular attacks, it can also lead to anxiety, agitation, and dependence. Despite the danger, substance use for sports adolescent is still prevalent (Eichner, 2008). The use of certain substances during sports can cause heart attack and death.

The quest for new ways to experience fun have driven a lot of adolescents into the use and abuse of substances (Soares et al., 2020). During this stage, adolescents seek out activities that provide a fun-filled experience and sense of adventure. The allure of substances often lies in their ability to alter their mood, increase their sense of euphoria, or provide a temporary

escape of reality. Boredom has been one of the reasons why adolescents abuse substances (Terry-McElrath et al., 2022). The adolescence stage is often characterised by heightened sense of restlessness and a desire for stimulation. When faced with lack of engaging activities, some adolescents may turn to substance abuse to alleviate their boredom. The substance taken in hope to improve their boredom or allow the experience of time to go faster. Shiner (2005) revealed that it is important for adolescents to have activities to keep them busy during their leisure time. Lack of activity allows adolescents to access the internet and have higher risk exposed to harmful advertisement. Advertisement and use of various types of substances in the media have resulted in adolescents trying out and abusing substances (Romer & Moreno, 2017). Adolescents were exposed to the role models that normalise the use and abuse of substances. The use and abuse are often depicted as pleasurable without explicit dangers and side effects. This has exposed a lot of adolescents to substances like alcohol, tobacco and marijuana (Romer & Moreno, 2017).

2.4 STAGES OF SUBSTANCE ABUSE

According to Jordan & Anderson (2017), focused on how early exposure to substances can increase the risk of changes in brain development and the likelihood of transitioning from casual use to developing dependence on substances later in life. The adolescent stage is referred to as the sensitive periods where adolescents are vulnerable to the effects of substance use. The transition from occasional use to dependence is often a gradual process which occurs over time. Understanding these sensitive periods provides the insights targeting prevention efforts that might help mitigate the risk of substance abuse and dependence. The stages of substance abuse according to Fluyau et al. (2024) are: (a) Stage 1: the initial user- gateway, (b) Stage 2: the regular user, (c) Stage 3: the risky user, (d) Stage 4: the dependence user stage, and (e) Stage 5: the addiction stage. Each stage is progressive unless an intervention is done.

The initial experimentation stage which is also the gate way stage typically involves individuals who try substances out of curiosity or due to social influences. The usage is often occasional and influenced by factors such as peer pressure, availability of substance, curiosity (Fluyau et al., 2024). This stage is characterized by people that just try it out to know if they

will like it or not. They may end up liking the feeling that comes up after taking such substance and may want to experience it again. The regular users are the ones who continue to consume the substances in a more frequent manner. These users consume the substances as a means of coping with emotional challenges or stress and may consume larger amounts to achieve intended effects due to their body system developing tolerance to the substance. This stage is marked by a person taking the substances once in a while or occasionally. Such occasions may be during parties just because they want to blend in with their peers and friends attending. It may also be during the celebration of festivities or traditional religious rites.

The risky users engage in behaviours that heighten the risk of adverse outcomes, such as using substances in unsafe situations. This stage often includes symptoms like neglecting responsibilities and truancy due to substance abuse (Fluyau et al., 2024). This stage started when the individual takes the substance whenever they have the opportunity or have access to it. They like to take it whenever they see it. They might just feel like they need it, or they miss the feeling it brings, and they decide to buy it for whatever the reason may be. Dependence stage is characterized by a compulsive pattern of abuse where the abuser feels the strong compulsion to use the substance despite facing the adverse effects of the drugs. Physical dependence leading to withdrawal symptoms may arise when the substance is not consumed. In addition to this, psychological dependence can create a belief that it is impossible to cope without the substance. This leads the way to addiction.

The addiction stage is the most severe stage, the abuser loses control over the substance abuse pattern. They develop drug seeking behaviours which leads to social, health and occupational problems. This stage is characterized by a person unable to function without taking the substance (Fluyau et al., 2024). They already are attached to it and even if they can feel that it is doing more harm to them than good, they still do not want to stop. They crave for it and get hungry for it like food and water. They start to act abnormally anytime they cannot have it because their body system is already used to having it. The progression from initial use to addiction shows that substance abuse is severe and requires intervention at each stage which includes prevention strategies for initial use to comprehensive treatment in the addiction stage.

Table 2.2: Stages of Substance Abuse

Stage	Description	Characteristics
Initial user	First experience with a substance	Experimental, infrequent use
Regular user	Increased frequency of use	Using to cope with stress and developing a pattern
Risky user	Engaging in dangerous behaviours	Neglecting responsibilities Getting involved in risky situations
Dependence	Compulsive use with withdrawal symptoms	Strong urge to use Physical and psychological dependence
Addiction	Complete loss of control over substance	Prioritizing substance above other things and chronic Relapsing

2.5 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

This study was guided by the Ryan & Deci (2000) two factor motivation theory to understand the motives for substance abuse among adolescents and how it can be prevented. Motivation involves the direction and energy to be involved in engaging a specific behaviour. The two main categories of motivations in this theory are: (a) the intrinsic and (b) the extrinsic motivation.

Intrinsic motivation is referred to as the satisfier in which the individual carried out an activity for the sole purpose of satisfaction. As such, the components of intrinsic motivation originate intrapersonal and within the control of the individual themselves. It is more apparent and dominant during early phase of development from childhood to teenage years before social expectations exert its effect onto the individuals (Ryan & Deci, 2000). Based on previous literatures discussed above, the intrinsic factors that can lead adolescents to abuse substances includes belief, personal characteristics, self-control, motivation, emotional urge, social support and family background.

On the other hand, extrinsic motivation is defined as carrying out an act for the sole purpose of attaining the outcome and much influenced by external factors. Despite their external nature, individuals may internalize the outcome as part of their intrinsic motivation. Therefore, extrinsic motivation factors may present in varying level of autonomy and

intentionality. Adolescents' behaviour may range from unwillingness or amotivation, passive compliance, or active personal commitment. Based on literatures discussed above, the extrinsic motivation behind substance abuse among adolescents may include media, place of upbringing, lack of parental supervision, easy access, school attended, and inadequate enforcement of regulation bodies.

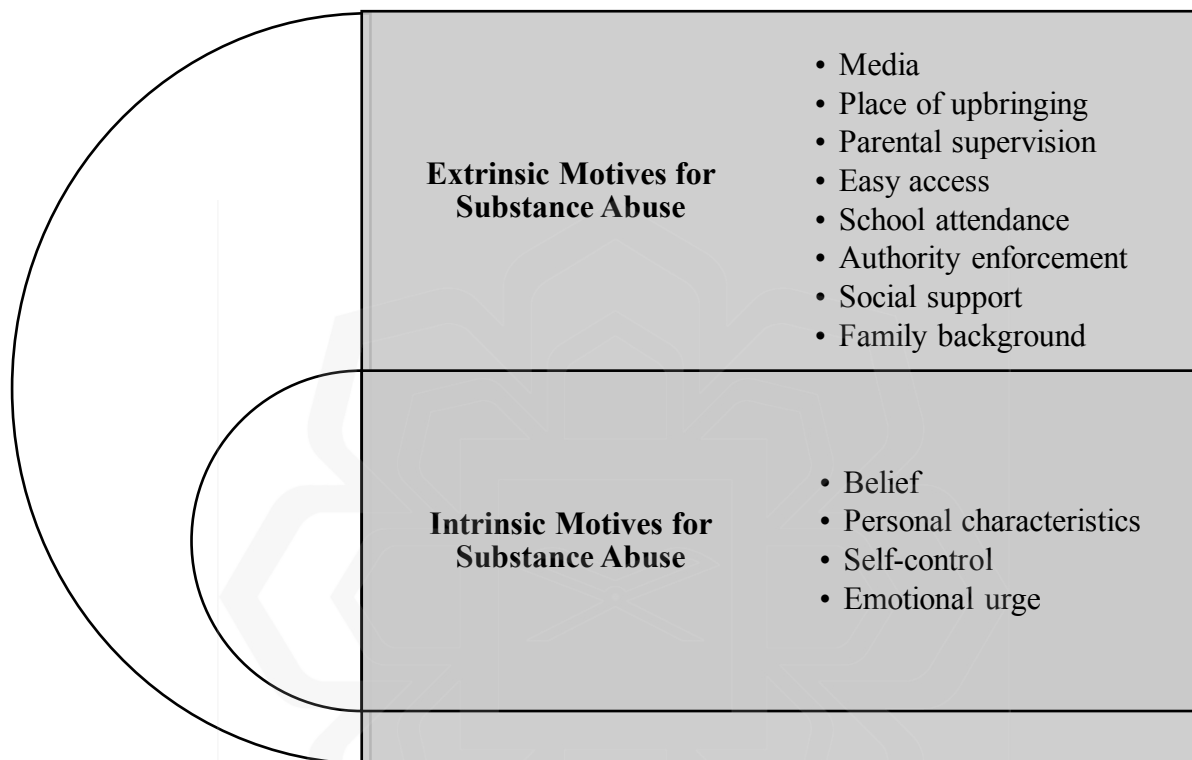


Figure 2.1 Possible Intrinsic and Extrinsic Motivation for Substance Abuse among Adolescents

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

This chapter discusses the scope of this study, area and period of study, study design, inclusion and exclusion criteria, and sampling area. It also discusses the method whereby data was collected for the study, instrumentation, and the method of analyses. Ethical approval was included for record purposes.

3.1 SCOPE OF THE STUDY

This study focused on understanding the adolescent's perspective on substance abuse among the Nigerian population. Adolescents comprise a large portion of the substance abuser in Nigeria, and they are in the early phase of the abuse spectrum. They may have yet developed dependence and have higher potential for rehabilitation. The perspective of adolescents on substance abuse covered the psychological, and social aspects. Adolescents are in the crucial psychosocial developmental stage during which their intuitiveness, identity, and industrious self-developed. These phases have a prolonged effect on the development of a person. Their development is also influenced by the cultural norms within their environment. Especially how they interact with people in their immediate environment.

3.2 STUDY AREA AND PERIOD

Lagos city (also known as Lagos state), as of 2016 is a home to over 12 million of the Nigeria population (National Bureau of Statistics, 2017). Lagos state is the most populous city in Africa yet smallest in area of the 36 states in Nigeria. It is situated in the south-western region of Nigeria, with Ikeja as the capital city. Lagos state is a neighbouring state to Ogun state as they meet along the North and the East. Sharing boundaries with the Republic of Benin on the West and its South is about 180km² aligning with the Atlantic Ocean. Financially, Lagos state is the major centre, and it is the most economically valuable state in Nigeria. There is a peaceful religious coexistence among Nigerians and Lagos state is a home to people of various ethnicity

and religion. Many of the Nigerian families were interfaith families (Femi-Adebayo et al., 2019).

Accommodating the highest number of literates in Nigeria, Lagos state has a soaring figure in human development index and major development projects in Nigeria notwithstanding the state of traffic and overpopulation. Lagos state is majorly the land of the Yoruba people who speak several varieties of the Yoruba language, then the Ewe and Ogu people settled in the far western region of the state. The city of Lagos is also the home to people from other ethnic groups in Nigeria and also foreigners from various countries (Femi-Adebayo et al., 2019).

The population of children within the ages of zero to five years is about two million, aged five years old to 14 years old in Lagos is over six million, and more than four million male and female of the population are about the ages of 15-24 years old. Nigerian children and youths make up the highest proportion of the population (Femi-Adebayo et al., 2019). The data for the study was conducted from the first week of February 2023 to the last week in March 2023.

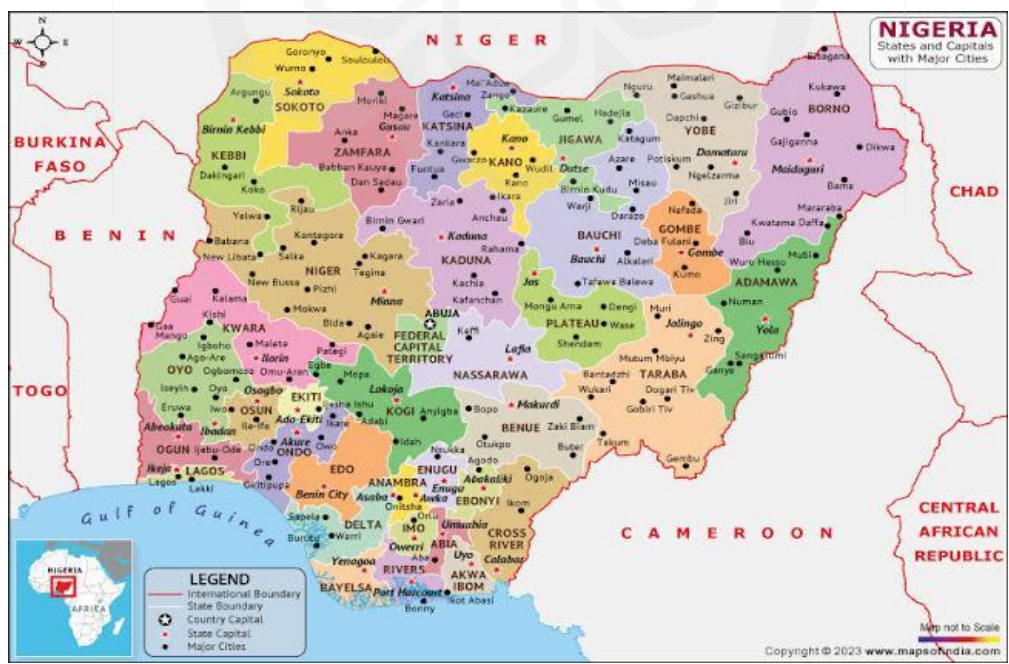


Figure 3.1 Map of Nigeria (source: Added from Google)

3.3 STUDY DESIGN

This descriptive qualitative study employed a purposive sampling method using the snowball technique. Such a method is most appropriate to study a sensitive topic of research. This study followed the standard protocol for qualitative studies COREQ (consolidated criteria for reporting qualitative study) for reporting qualitative studies.

3.4 INCLUSION AND EXCLUSION CRITERIA

The inclusion criteria of respondents were:

1. Age 10 to 19 years old
2. Currently abusing or has experience of substance abuse

The exclusion criteria of respondents was as followed:

1. Students with no consent from parents.

An adolescent is a person within the age of 10 years old to the age of 19 years old (World Health Organization, 2017). The inclusion criteria fit the scope of the study population and to enable diverse appreciation of the psychological and social aspects surrounding their substance abuse behaviour. Substance abuse experience was identified during the field observation and administration of the ASSIST questionnaire (Humeniuk et al., 2010). The exclusion was decided to protect the well-being of the respondents as most of them are still below the legal age of consent.

3.5 SAMPLING AREA

The respondents of this study were residents in Lagos state, which is a metropolitan city with 20 local government areas. The Ojodu district has 106 schools and one technical college. The first two schools did not give their approval for the research because they had lot of engagements outlined for the students and the students were preparing for their mid-term examinations. The schools are situated in a civilised environment. Four other schools gave their approval, but the interview ended after reaching saturation in the second school. Only seven parents and seven students gave their consent in the first school, while 10 parents and students gave their consent in the second school.

3.6 DATA COLLECTION METHOD

Prior to data collection, there was a general talk with the students about their views on substance abuse, especially on the types of abused substances that are common in their environment, various forms of cocktail substances. The talk acted as field observation that helped the researcher to identify potential respondents. The researcher asked the students about their view on substances and the kind of substances they are familiar with. It was an ice-breaking session. Most of the respondents were generous with their reply and talked about the substances that they take regularly. These eager responses guided the researcher to do purposive sampling. Once the respondents were identified, the researcher invited them individually to participate in the research. This was done at both schools involved in this study.

Upon verbal consent, a general participant information sheet and consent form were provided to obtain informed consent from the legal guardian of the respondent. After the participants and their parents had been properly briefed on the process of the study, the researcher proceeded to request for their consents. The participants and their guardians understood the nature, duration, purpose of the study and the method by which it was to be conducted. The researcher distributed 73 consent forms in total to the students that were willing to participate in the research after a combination of purposive and snowballing sampling techniques were applied. However, only 17 forms were signed by the legal guardians and

returned. After the parents gave their consent, the school management organised a meeting with the parents and the researcher. The parents were given the opportunity to discuss their concerns and ask more questions during this session. Six of the legal guardians met with the researcher for a brief meeting to ask their questions about the process of the research. The students whose parents did not consent were not considered legible for the interview.

Data was collected with a semi-structured interview protocol. In-depth interviewing techniques was used to gain details on the motives of substance abuse in the counselling room provided by the school. The school counsellor assisted the researcher with organising the respondents in the waiting room and making sure that they did not interfere with the interview. The respondents in the waiting room could not hear or see what was going on in the counselling room. Interviews were recorded through audio recording and transcribed immediately after each interview. The school authority gave limited time to spend with each student because they did not want them to be away from the classroom for too long. The target population for this research were students that are fluent in English language because English language is the official language in Nigeria. However, there were certain terminologies which were easily expressed in the native language or certain street names. In such cases, the terminologies in native Nigerian language were transcribed verbatim and translated to English for better understanding of team members. After the transcription, transcript was not given to the respondents but the researcher asked them to reconfirm important data during the interview. All recordings and interview transcripts were kept in a secure location and strictly confidential. Only team members were given access to the data. Based on previous research involving adolescents, saturation was achieved after 15 respondents (Oluwole et al., 2018). However, this study achieved saturation after 17 respondents.

Data triangulation was also done using focus-group discussion on ten respondents from in-depth interview session and ten new students. During this process, all the respondents were invited into the school hall. Ten more respondents who brought in their consent forms after saturation has been achieved during in-depth interviews also participated in the focus-group discussion. In total, 20 respondents participated in the focus-group discussion with seven respondents during in-depth interview were absent. The same in-depth interview guide was used to conduct the focus-group discussion which led to additional questions used to explore

details of their patterns and motives of substance abuse. During the focus-group discussion, participants were asked to talk about their introduction to substance abuse, how they feel when they abuse substances, and how they feel when they do not. The focus-group was an interactive session where the respondents were allowed to take turns to express their views. The researcher observed for verbal and nonverbal cues related to agreement or disagreement from their peers. This became an opportunity to explore their thoughts and opinions. Number and alphabet tags were given to respondents during the focused-group discussion to ease identification. While the session was being recorded via audio, the researcher took short notes about the respondents who were talking to easily identify who made the statement during transcription. The findings of the discussion were compared with the themes and subthemes identified through in-depth interview methods.

3.7 INSTRUMENTATION

The main researcher was the sole agent for data collection for both in-depth interviews and focused-group discussion. The main researcher is a female Bachelor's Degree holder in Psychology who has been an educationist and school counsellor for more than seven years and has the passion to help young people. Additionally, the main researcher also had experience in delivering talks to adolescents. The researcher went through training for in-depth interview and focused-group discussion before going for data collection. The participants of the research do not have any prior contact with the researcher.

The semi-structured interview guide consisted of four parts; the first part asked the demographic details of the respondents. The other three parts were named as sections A, B, and C. Section A have five questions to explore the various types of substances that they have used or are using and their means of obtaining these substances. Section B contained eight questions that explored the respondents' first substance, age at first abuse, influence from friends, and their family member's reaction to finding out that they use such substances. Finally, Section C asked the respondents about their feelings when they use or do not use these substances as well as how has the substance helped them achieve the motive that was mentioned earlier.

3.8 DATA ANALYSIS

Data was analysed using thematic analysis through inductive and deductive approach using manual method. The steps followed included familiarising with the data then generated initial codes using the theoretical framework and then, the themes were identified. This was followed by a review of the identified themes where the researcher checked the themes related to the codes and the overall data. The theoretical framework acted as the base for the coding process and additional codes were generated as needed inductively. Themes were then defined and named to correlate with the new codes generated and a report was made. Data was coded manually. Codes listed from the literature review and theoretical framework using the behaviour and patterns of abuse of respondents. Researcher was able to identify the intrinsic and extrinsic motivation related to substance abuse. The codes were cross examined by the research team which consisted of the main supervisor, two assistant supervisors, and researcher. The trustworthiness of data was confirmed through the triangulation process with the FGD findings.

3.9 ETHICAL APPROVAL

Prior to conducting the study, ethical approval was obtained from the IIUM research committee [IIUM/504/14/11/2/IREC 2023-210]. Similarly, approval was received from the educational district office in Lagos state, Nigeria before the school principals gave their approvals. Adolescents in this study that were found to be actively abusing substances were referred to the school counsellor to ensure their well-being. The school counsellor was committed to pursue intervention and notify the legal guardians.

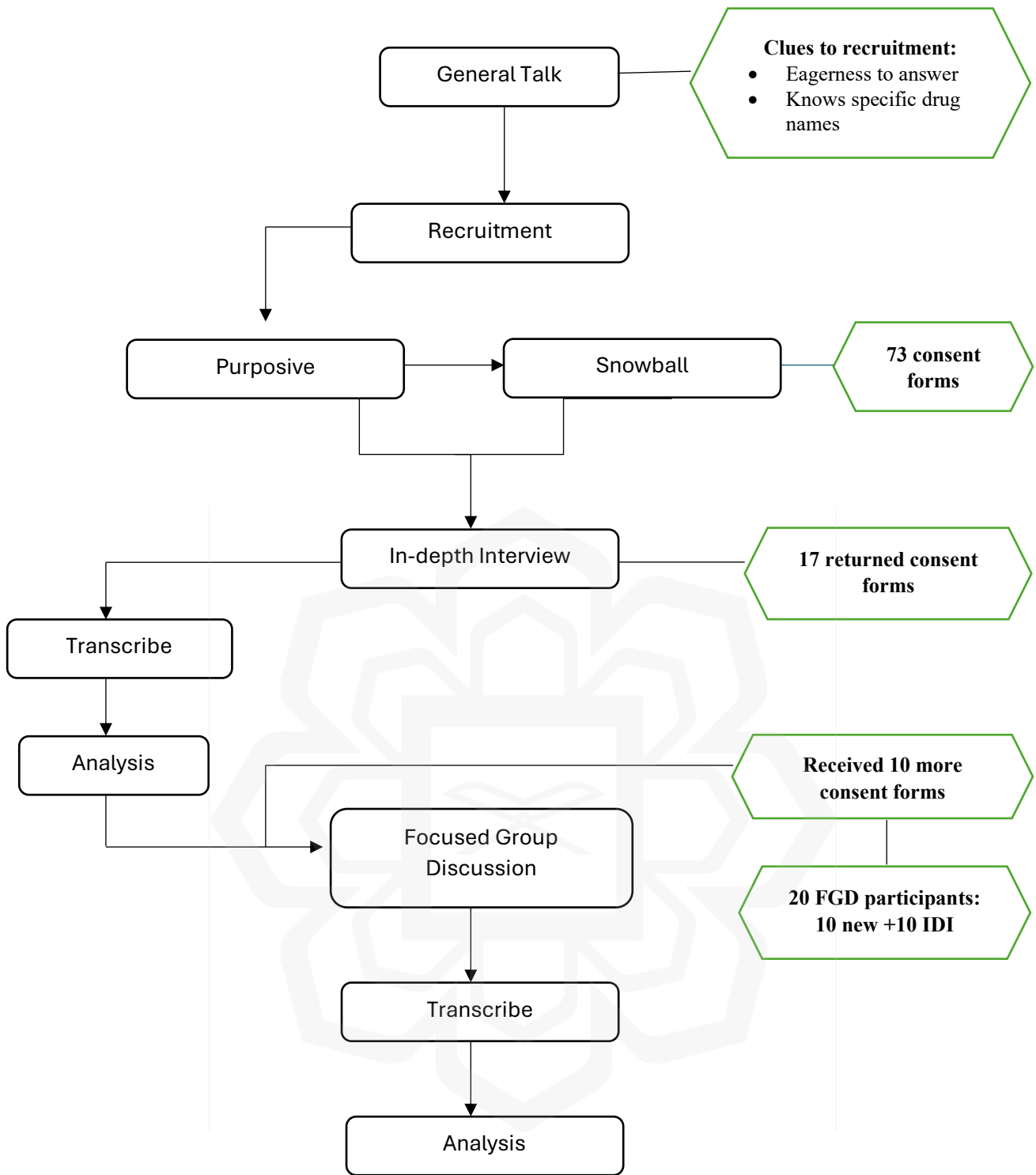


Figure 3.2: Data collection Flow Chart

CHAPTER FOUR

RESULTS

This chapter reveals the results of the data collection done for this study. During the focus-group discussion, all the students were given a tag for easy identification. The respondents who participated in in-depth interview were identified by numbers while the additional 10 who joined them for focus-group discussion were identified by alphabets. During data collection, all the participants were adolescents within the ages of 10 to 19 years. Four out of the 17 participants of the in-depth interview were females while 13 were males. The most common substance abused among the participants of this study was alcohol, followed by palm wine, codeine, marijuana, and tramadol. All of the participants abused at least two substances, except for one participant. Majority of participants were introduced to the substance by a family member, followed by self-exploration and friends. The participants commonly tried their first substance at the age of 10 to 14 years old, with almost 30 % tried their first substance earlier at the age of 5 to 9 years old. Less than a fifth tried their first substance at the age of 15 to 19 years old. The representation of these can be seen in Table 4.1 below.

Table 4.1 Demographic Characteristics of the Respondents (n = 17)

Characteristics	n (%)	Mean (SD)
Age		13.5 (2.21)
Gender		
Male	13 (76.5)	
Female	4 (23.5)	
Five most common substance		
Alcohol	17 (100)	
Palm wine	15 (88.2)	
Codeine	4 (23.5)	
Marijuana	3 (17.6)	
Tramadol	2 (11.8)	
Who gave first substance		
Family member	9 (52.9)	
Self	5 (29.4)	
Friends	3 (17.6)	
Age of first try		
5 – 9 years	5 (29.4)	
10 - 14 years	9 (52.9)	
15 – 19 years	3 (17.6)	
Abuse multiple substances	16 (94.1)	

Various kinds of alcoholic substances were being abused by the respondents. There was beer, dry gin, whisky, and red wine with high concentration of alcohol. This is different from palm wine because palm wine comes from a natural source, with lower alcohol concentration, and hold specific purpose in the Nigerian culture. Thematic analysis revealed two main themes within intrinsic motivation domain that are, hedonic pursuits and eudaimonic efforts. Hedonic pursuits consist of subthemes such as curiosity and thrill seeking. Eudaimonic efforts consist of subthemes such as functional, emotional, and social motives. Finally, only one main theme was discovered within the extrinsic motivation domain that was named ecosystem with subthemes such as accessibility, poverty, tradition, and parental influence. These were summarised in Figure 4.1 below.

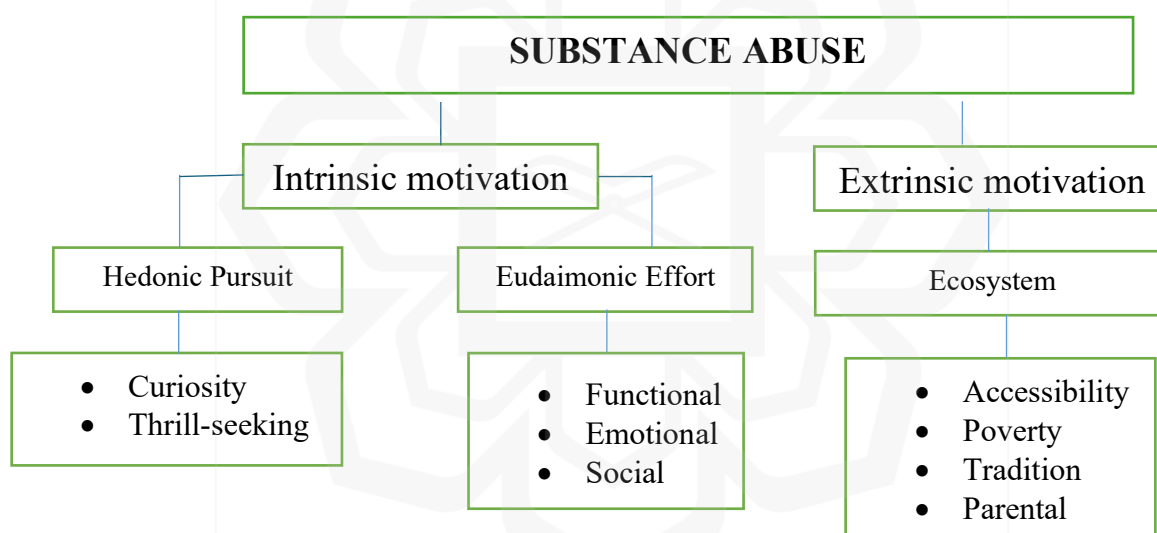


Figure 4.1 Summary of Thematic Analysis

4.1 HEDONIC PURSUIT

Hedonic pursuit involves motive that energise adolescents to the need to feel good (Gentzler et al., 2021). This theory originates from a theory of mental wellbeing that proposes the need to feel good by adolescents. There were two subthemes identified during thematic analysis which are: (a) curiosity, and (b) thrill seeking.

4.1.1 Curiosity

Curiosity refers to the state of being intensively desirous and emotionally eager towards knowing something. This involves the emotional implementation of energy towards satisfying curiosity. They were curious to know what it tasted like and decided to buy it for themselves.

For example:

“I just wanted to have a taste of it... I just bought it to have a taste of it”

(Respondent 8, 12 years old, male)

“...just wanted to try it”

(Respondent 11, 13 years old, male)

4.1.2 Thrill seeking

Thrill seeking referred to an action that intends to achieve a feeling of unusual excitement which may possibly be dangerous. These adolescents want to achieve euphoria and have fun.

For example:

“I always feel happy, I'll be feeling okay and that's the benefit”

(Respondent 15, 17 years old, male)

“It's just for fun...”

(Respondent 13, 15 years old, male)

“For fun...”

(Respondent 2, 13 years old, male)

A lot of substances were usually served in teen parties, celebrations and general gatherings where adolescents are present. There were also respondents who consumed substance for the first time through these events. These were captured in the following quotes:

“I didn't buy it; it was at my friend's birthday party.... they had it there with *skuchie*”

(Respondent 16, 13 years old, female)

(skuchie is a Nigerian cocktail of drugs that is being abused by many Nigerian adolescents).

“I take alcohol, beer and palm wine... at parties”

(Respondent 10, 12 years old, male)

“so many parties that we go they have beer there. A party without alcohol is not fun but at grandma's burial, I first had it there”.

(Respondent 8, 12 years old, male)

Some even believe that when they are bored, they need to look for something or someone exciting to make them feel livelier. They consider this while choosing friends and purposely avoids choosing someone who is boring. This was evident in the following quote:

“I see a more excited friend, a friend that is more... that has more exciting”

(Respondent 17, 15 years old, male)

4.2 EUDAIMONIC EFFORTS

This motive involves an attempt to living life to the fullest, and satisfy one's inner capacity (Gentzler et al., 2021). This portrays the level of happiness for an adolescent as the manifestation of living a contented life and you cannot be contented if you are not happy. The three main sub-themes that were discovered in this theme are: (a) functionality, (b) emotional, and (c) social.

4.2.1 Functionality

Functionality refers to using these substances for practical and purposeful reasons. It explains how these adolescents are being able to practically utilise the use of these substances. Some of

the participants were able to describe the practical importance of the substance to them in a various context.

Some of the participants mentioned that they consumed the substance in order to stay active. Without the substance, some of the respondents reported feeling tired and low energy. These were captured in the following quotes:

“Just to arrange, cool my body or when I'm tired it cools my body down... I don't know why but, for energy... like...”

(Respondent 14, 10 years old, male)

“It makes me active”

(Respondent 1, 13years old, male)

Some participants mentioned that they consumed the substance to help them have a good sleep. They explained that the substance makes them feel dizzy and they loved the drowsy feeling. This is evident in the following quotes:

“When I take it, I feel good and dizzy. I feel like sleeping, I like sleeping”.

(Respondent 7, 13 years old, female)

“It helps me relax and I sleep well”

(Respondent 9, 18 years old, male)

Some respondents reported that the substance helps them to be more sociable and welcoming in interacting with other people. Without taking this substance, they were not able to have a proper discussion with peers, and they were not comfortable in a crowded environment. According to him, he smokes marijuana about two times in a week and drinks alcohol about three times in a week.

“It makes me friendly... I do not like to be around friends to talk so much... it makes me more jovial... it makes me cool”

(Respondent 17, 15 years old, male)

4.2.2 Emotional

This sub-theme covers the mood of these adolescents which are a contributing factor to their manner of abuse. Adolescents may experience an emotional phase characterised by teenage angst. Various developmental challenges and body changes may come with unexplainable stress, depression, or anger. Teenage angst causes unexplainable mood swings which can put pressure on an adolescent and thereby become a contributing factor for the use and abuse of substances. For example:

“Sometimes I just need to take something to help me reason in my own way...”

(Respondent 11, 13 years old, male)

Some of the participants believe that their substance of abuse helps them to relax from their stress and makes them feel calm. This produces a tangible benefit to the participants. This can be observed in the following quotes:

“It makes me relaxed...”

(Respondent 17, 17 years old, male)

“If I'm stressed, it helps me relax...”

(Respondent 9, 18 years old, male)

Some of the participants talked about using substances to get away from the feeling of depression. A particular respondent who comes from a poor background and, he lost his father at a very young age claims that the substances he abuses gives him hope and reassurance. For instance:

“it makes me to overcome depression... it makes me feel like there is hope... maybe if I'm depressed and I already have other things in my mind I'm worried about”

(Respondent 17, 15 years old, male)

Some participants believe that their substance of abuse helps to calm them down when they are angry. Without this substance, they show more aggressive behaviour during conversations which do not favour them. This is shown in the quote below:

“Just like if I'm angry, last time they were talking about money in my area, like someone took my money, some dollars in hook, I just took some Canadian loud (marijuana) and I just calm”.

(Respondent 1, 13years old, male)

“Like if I'm angry, I like to take it also if I'm angry... it makes my anger to subside”.

(Respondent 7, 13 years old, female)

“...it reduces my anger, and it doesn't make me to get angry very fast because I'm quick to anger... the only benefit I see is anger. It helps me to manage my anger.

(Respondent 17, 15 years old, male)

4.2.3 Social

The social sub-theme elaborates the social influence on adolescent substance use and abuse. A few of our respondents established the fact that social life has a bandwagon effect on adolescents when it comes to the use of substances right from the trial stage to the stage of consistency. Some of them believe that the substance makes them to become more sociable. For example:

“...it makes me friendly, I don't like to be around people... it makes me cool”

(Respondent 17, 15 years old, male)

Some of them felt left out and felt the need to be included in the social circle of friends. This can be more prominent in social gatherings that involves adolescents. The following quotes show confirmation of this need to fit in:

“...because I saw them drinking it and it was cold.”

(Respondent 4, 14 years old, female)

“... I asked for the beer actually... the rest were drinking it and I felt somehow, I asked him, and he gave me.”

(Respondent 3, 12 years old, female)

Other respondents also had reported about being comfortable around people that love doing the same thing as them. Being around those who do not abuse substance forces them to fit in. This becomes a reinforcing factor as quoted below:

“...there are some friends, when you smoke with them and you people do everything together, your life is more sweet but there are some friends who don't smoke, so you need to fit into their way of life. I'm more comfortable with people that do the things I do”

(Respondent 17, 15 years old, male)

“I saw my friends doing it and I also wanted to take it.”

(Respondent 12, 16 years old, male)

A few of the respondents reported direct or indirect pressure on them by their peers. A few of the respondents were influenced by their friends to take these substances overtly, and some of them were even influenced deceitfully and took the substance unknowingly. These were captured in the following quotes:

“He didn't tell me to try it, the boy brought it to school but he has already mixed it with sprite, so I now drank it. He's my best friend... it was later that he now told me that. Sometimes, if I go to his house, I used to follow him and drink it.”

(Responded 13, 15 years old, male)

“Took it with my friends, I got tipsy and misbehaved...”

(Respondent 12, 16years old, male)

“Except my friends come to my house, I'll just ask them to go to my bar...”

(Respondent 9, 18years old, male)

“Like in our street, people that use it, they will have it in the house, they're like family members and I used to stay...”

(Respondent 1, 13years old, male)

4.3 ECOSYSTEM

Ecosystem points to the people that these adolescents live and interact with in their environment, the culture and way of life, and condition of their families. Environmental factors are one of the factors that influence these adolescents into the use and abuse of substances. These consists of subthemes such as: (a) accessibility, (b) poverty, (c) tradition, and (d) parental.

4.3.1 Accessibility

The availability of substances to these adolescents have made it even easier for them to have access to it. Even though they are underage, a lot of them buy these substances themselves without being questioned. Some parents buy alcohol and keep at home without secure storage. This gives their children easy access to consume alcohol at their own will. Instances are in quotes below:

“... I don't buy with my money, if she buys. I don't buy it; they just buy it at home.”

(Respondent 16, 13 years old, female)

“...our landlord sells it”

(Respondent 16, 13 years old, female)

“...I buy it’

(Respondent 9, 18 years old, male)

“We always use it in our family house, they share for everybody”

(Respondent 5, 10 years old, male)

“My mommy sells alcohol and cigarette”

(Respondent 3, 12 years old female)

“...like in our street, people that use it, they will have it in the house. They're like family friends and I use to stay there”

(Respondent 1, 13years old, male)

4.3.2 Poverty

The financial capacity of their families is another factor contributing to the abuse of substances among adolescents. Some of the respondents sell substances as a hustle to assist their parents to take care of them and their other siblings. This is observed in the following quotes:

“... I come from a very poor background... its poverty, another thing is lack of good government...so, I meet a lot of people when I go and hawk goods. So, some of them, they are smokers”

(Respondent 17, 15 years old, male)

A particular student also mentioned during the Focused group discussion that abusing substance is his lifestyle due to his involvement in cybercrime.

“...sometimes I just browse, you know as a yahoo boy, I have seen it as my lifestyle. If I want to browse around 2, that's the normal thing to high my spirit and motivate me”.

(Student B, 13 years old, male)

Some adolescents live independently. They have resorted to cybercrime and other illegal means to earn money as they have been saddled with the responsibility of caring for themselves and their family at a young age. For instance:

“... sometimes I even send money to the house... yes I work”

(Respondent 9, 18 years old, male)

“...I am not staying with my parents since I clock 13, I live close to the school.

Some of my mates like me also live in the lodge around here... sometimes, during holiday, if I am not with the guys bombing, I go home. I sell cana too”.

(Student A, 15 years old, male)

4.3.3 Parental

This subtheme explains the roles that parents of adolescents towards exposure to substances and monitoring adolescents' behaviour. Negligence and lack of proper parenting are the codes derived from this subtheme. Few of our respondents mentioned that their parents gave them alcohol.

“Yes, my daddy gave it to me... the alcohol, the palm wine and the beer”

(Respondent 16, 13 years old, female)

“...he gave me palm wine. Just to drink it, he gave all the children around. My little brother was the youngest child there. He was 5 years. Everybody drank as they want”

(Respondent 6, 13 years old, male)

Some parents also were very negligent with their children. Despite being aware that their children are abusing substances, they do not take any action to stop it. This was captured in the following quotes:

“My uncle, because I’m not staying with my parents. I stay with my uncle for now. My uncle knows. My uncle doesn't care, he drinks too”

(Respondent 15, 17 years old, male)

“So he had guests who were drinking and smoking, so they allowed me to try it”

(Respondent 10, 12 years old, male)

A particular respondent whose parent sells alcohol and cigarette, mentioned that some children as little as 4 years old are also being sent to buy these substances. This causes early exposure to the substance and potentially develop abuse later.

“... I sell to them too... they use to send, maybe like 4, they will write it inside paper”

(Respondent 3, 12 years old, female)

When asked if there was any chance those little children will taste the substance they were sent to buy, she affirmed “yes” and mentioned that some of the little messengers were being caught sometimes.

“Some of them used to find out and beat the child”

(Respondent 3, 12 years old, female)

4.3.4 Tradition

This portrays the actions, beliefs, and traditions of the family of these adolescents. Some of our respondents mentioned that their parents use alcohol for certain medicinal purposes. There was also a mixture of alcohol with herbs and prescription drugs to make traditional medicines. The

parents believe that alcohol works best to relieve some symptoms or pains. These were captured in the following quotes:

“My mommy believes when she takes alcohol, it stops tummy pain”

(Respondent 16, 13 years old, female)

“My aunty takes dry gin for menstrual pain”

(Respondent 5, 10 years old male)

“... she took some local herbs and put it in alcohol... after I took it, after taking it, I went to toilet, I purged, and the pain relieved me... they use it to mix drugs... some drugs like chloramphenicol and the others, mix it together with some herbs for drugs...”

(Respondent 6, 13 years old, male)

“My daddy uses it to mix herbs”

(Respondent 4, 15 years old, female)

Some cultures also involved the use of alcohol and bitter cola for burial rites and rituals without considering the age of the persons involved. A few respondents confirmed the use of alcoholic substances for burial rites as quoted below:

“At my grandma’s burial, I had it there...”

(Respondent 8, 12 years old, male)

“It is for traditional stuffs. The palm wine and the bitter cola, the advantage is that it did not let me to be left out of the burial ceremony... the wine was like if I don’t take it, I’m not doing anything for the burial...”

(Respondent 11, 13 years old, male)

Interestingly, the exposure to alcohol continued as the respondent assumed formal responsibility for the clan. The succession ceremony involved the consumption of substances as dictated by the elders of the clan. This was captured in the following quotes:

“They also gave me a chieftaincy title... they now removed his beads and gave it to me, they said I should take the alcoholics and pour it in the beads and when I’m done I should drink some...”

(Respondent 11, 13 years old, male)

4.4 FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSION FINDINGS

During the focused group discussion, additional information was derived from similar interview guide questions. The FGD also confirmed information obtained during the individual in-depth interviews. Additional information obtained was reported in this subchapter.

The respondents talked about how they made cocktail substances, concoctions, and energy bars from various substances. They also discussed mainly of the functional uses of these street motivated combinations which have street names attached to them. For instance, there is Monkey tail. This is a concoction made with combination of dry gin, cannabis, tobacco, dried pawpaw leaf, and the dried tip of a monkey’s tail.

“it was those bros that I used to stay with that taught me how to make monkey tail...”

(Student A, 15 years old, male)

“I drink my dad’s monkey tail sometimes but my dad doesn’t know, it is good for energy. My dad uses it for pain relief any time he is very tired and he uses it when he is going to drive overnight... He is a tanker driver. Some people use it to improve sexual performance. All those herbs hawkers used to have it at our junction”

(Student D, 18 years old, male)

“I am sure your dad uses it to improve sexual performance because that’s the only thing I know it works for... ma, don’t drink it o, it is not good”

(Student I, 15 years old, male)

“...they will allow the tip of the monkey tail to get dried very well first before putting it inside the dry gin... tobacco and marijuana is added in it too. But some people add more things, I don’t know”

(Student C, 12 years old, male)

Another popular cocktail juice among these adolescents is *skuchie* also known as gutter juice or gutter water. This is a cocktail juice made with hibiscus drink popularly known as *zobo* drink in Nigeria or Ribena juice, marijuana, codeine, tramadol, and some other things.

“...we will mix, *5alive*, strawberry, *zobo*, codeine, DSP- CSP... my squad do call me to come and make it. I usually add baby *emzo* (baby cough syrup) and rephynol. We have to put it in the fridge so that it can get very cold”

(Student C, 12 years old, male)

“yes oh, you know what is good. It tastes better when it is cold and you will enjoy it more... everybody will sleep off after drinking it”

(Student E, 14 years old, male)

“...you forgot to add *cana* inside... marijuana”

(Respondent 10, 12 years old, male)

Choco is one of the respondents’ most favourite. It is an energy bar made with chocolate drink powder and cannabis. A lot of the adolescents mentioned that it was their favourite during the session.

“...it is just milo powder and *cana* (cannabis). We will allow it to be very strong...”

(Student J, 16 years old, female)

“Yes... it has to be crunchy, my favourite... you will feel rugged after eating it”

(Student B, 13 years old, male)

“...choco is so nice, you will not even know that there is anything in it, you will just be eating it like chocolate...”

(Student F, 14 years old, male)

Our respondents talked about *colos*. This is the slang name for synthetic cannabinoids which is sold under different names like spice or K2. Some of them mix it with other substances to make the effect stronger.

“...it is cheaper than marijuana and even more stronger, it is not for the weak minds. It can kill someone oo”

(Student H, 18 years old, male)

“...it has killed someone before in our street...he took overdose of it without eating food”

(Respondent 13, 15 years old, male)

“...if it is not cana, I don't want...my brother used to take colos and I used to take it sometimes with him but the work is strong o. it will make you stay loose sleep and you will not be comfortable with your body”

(Respondent 1, 13 years old, male)

“colos is the father of everything o, it will make some people stand on the spot for hours...”

(Student J, 16 years old, female)

“Eating fruit is good for people that take colos because that thing can dry someone blood...”

(Student G, 15 years old, female)

“it makes some people to be acting like mad man... they will just be talking or some of them will just be doing as if they are climbing something but they are just on a plain ground...”

(Student A, 15 years old, male)

Lastly, our respondents talked about the use of kolanut to stay awake and for strength. All but one of the respondents who participated in the in-depth interview were abusing more than one substance at a time and a higher percentage of them were introduced to substances by their immediate family members. Even though a higher percentage of them had their first try between the ages of 10 to 14 years old, it is still more saddening to discover that 29% of the study population had their first try between the ages of five to nine years old.

With all these results, we were able to see that the prevalence and motives for substance use among the Nigerian adolescents became evident through the themes and subthemes that we discovered. The most abused substance was alcohol, and this proves the fact that something needs to be done to prevent the Nigerian adolescents from getting these substances that are harmful to them and to the Nigerian communities. Table 4.2 below shows substances that were revealed during focus-group discussion.

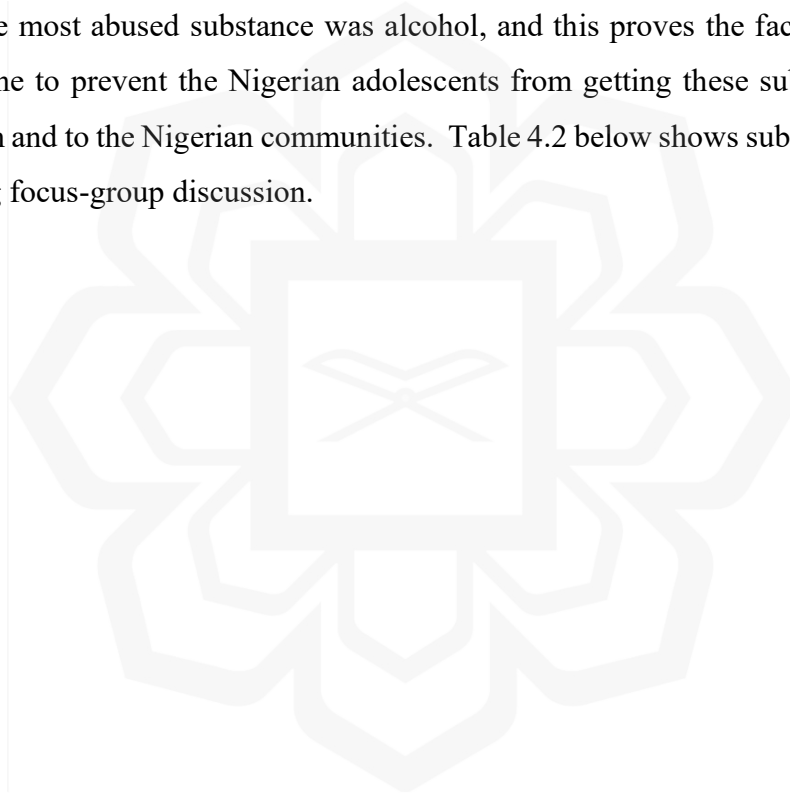


Table 4.2: Substances Abused in Focus-Group Discussion

Substances	Street name	Mode of abuse	Possible effects
Alcohol	Liquor, Beer, Red wine, Herbal bitters	Drinking	Euphoria, Reduced anxiety
Palm wine	Oguro, palmy	Drinking	Euphoria
<i>Skuchie</i>	<i>Omi gutter</i>	Drinking	Euphoria, Unusual strength
Marijuana chocolate bar	Choco	Chewed	Euphoria, Increased appetite
Marijuana	<i>Cana</i>	Smoked	Increased appetite, Calmness
Codeine	Coder, Syrup	Drinking	Euphoria, Drowsiness, Increased thirst
Cigarette	Cigar	Smoked	Relaxed feeling, Reduced anxiety
Rohypnol	Reph	Swallowed	Sleepiness, Relaxed body
Kola nut	<i>Obi</i>	Chewed	Alertness, Staying awake
<i>Colos</i>	Colorado	Smoked	Euphoria, Dry mouth, Increased appetite
Tramadol	Tram	Swallowed or dissolved in drinks	Pain relief, Calmness
Inhalants	Gum, Solvents	Sniffed	Excitation
Monkey tail	MT	Drink	Calmness, Staying awake

CHAPTER FIVE

DISCUSSIONS, LIMITATIONS, & RECOMMENDATIONS

This is the concluding chapter of this study that contains the summary and discussions of the research findings. Recommendations also were made to provide possible solutions to the discovered problems that are related to substance abuse among adolescents and for future researchers undertaking research on similar topic and population.

To recapitulate, this study described the common substances abused among the Nigerian adolescents in Lagos state. The focused-group discussions and in-depth interview revealed the hedonic, eudaimonic, and ecosystemic motives behind substance abuse. These themes revealed what substance abuse really mean to the adolescents.

5.1 DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS OF RESPONDENTS

The respondents of this study were residents in Lagos state, which is a metropolitan city with 20 local government areas. Specifically, the respondents came from the Ojodu local government area with age between 10 to 19 years old and majority were male. In the past 10 years, there has not been much qualitative studies carried out in Lagos state on adolescents' abuse of substances. There was one study that was conducted on the population of Lagos state in recent times (Onigbogi et al., 2023). The study by Onigbogi et al. (2023) utilised quantitative approach with multistage sampling technique and a large sample size to determine the prevalence of substance abuse among adolescents. The study by Onigbogi et al. (2023) is a cross-sectional quantitative study which recruited 422 respondents through a multistage sampling method with majority of females. The data collection process was carried out through a pre-tested structured self-administered questionnaire. Its result showed that most abused substance by adolescents were opiates (codeine, heroine), tranquilizers, hallucinogens (cannabis, ecstasy), and amphetamines. The common factors that influenced respondents were family friends, parents and peers.

Similar to Onigbogi et al. (2023), this research studied adolescent within the ages of 10 – 19 years old and both male and female gender. However, in comparison, this study utilized a qualitative approach with snowball sampling technique to a specific local government area. This difference in methodology complements each other's findings. The study by Onigbogi et al. (2023) has strength in generalization which is appropriate to its research objectives. On the other hand, this study contributed qualitative knowledge that explored deeply on motives behind substance abuse.

All respondents cooperated with the researcher and answered all questions without holding back. This rich information was made possible due to the qualitative approach of this study and had helped with the accuracy of the data collected. The accuracy of the data is based on the methodological triangulation of in-depth interview findings with the focused group discussion and field observation. Despite being limited in terms of generalisation, this study findings can be utilised to inform future quantitative research that allows for generalisation. This will be crucial to provide stronger basis to designing a state-wide intervention or changing the policy of the local government area.

During data collection, limited time frame was given despite the respondents were eager to share more information. This restriction was imposed by the school administration in order to minimise disturbance to the learning experience. Future research may want to consider the timing to collect data from this population. School holidays or extra-curricular hours may provide better timing to enable longer duration of focused-group discussion. Focused group discussion will be a better method to use after a field observation for future research because some respondents were more open to talk about their experience in the midst of peers with mutual experience.

There were three main themes derived through thematic analysis such as hedonic pursuits, eudaimonic efforts, and ecosystem. Hedonic pursuits consist of subthemes such as curiosity and thrill seeking. Eudaimonic efforts consist of subthemes such as functional, emotional, and social motives. Finally, ecosystem has subthemes such as accessibility, poverty, tradition, and parental influence. The following subchapters discussed each theme to appreciate

similarities or differences with previous studies and provide recommendation for future research and practices.

5.2 HEDONIC PURSUIT

Curiosity is a basic quality on the development of human beings especially during adolescence, as it plays an important role in the cognitive, emotional, and social growth of adolescents. Curiosity is related to the feeling of excitement and the desire for new experience (Kashdan & Steger, 2007). Curiosity can promote flexibility and adaptability in adolescents because it will make adolescents engage in various activities that are challenging and thereby upgrading their skills in problem-solving. The association between curiosity with excitement and the feeling of happiness explains why curiosity is being driven by impulsive trait. Adolescents who exhibit high impulsivity were more likely to try psychoactive substances (Nawi et al., 2021). Impulsive behaviour was further boosted by the satisfaction that these substances create.

Similar studies in Nigeria also showed that curiosity and thrill seeking are one of the contributing causes of substance abuse among adolescents in Oyo state (Idowu et al., 2018). Adolescents love to have fun, always look forward to having fun, and tend to be curious about many things in life because they are in their active years. At such age, they are normally given partial autonomy to decide and participate in any life events. Given such freedom, they tend to explore every facet of life, especially when they spend more time with their colleagues. Adjzen et al. (2021) have concluded that curiosity is the hallmark of adolescents and prerequisite for them to gain essential life experience that leads to maturity.

Curiosity is normal but the aspect which the curiosity is focused on can be a problem. The curiosity to experiment with a psychoactive substance can be triggered by a gathering of friends or relatives that are already abusing the substance. In addition, the exposure to the media at an early age might increase the curiosity about how the substance works or what it is used for. The adolescents might want to imitate their favourite actor or celebrity artist. Furthermore, Ernst & Luciana (2015) explained the reason why adolescents are keen on taking risks just to

have fun due to the excessive secretion of dopamine in their body system. This secretion occurs when curiosity or thrill seeking takes place. Dopamine is the reward molecule secreted by the brain to ignite the part of the brain which is responsible for happiness and life supporting abilities (example: drinking water when feeling thirsty). It is able to create a feeling of satisfaction when this need is being met. Unfortunately, psychoactive substances also stimulate these abilities even more than the feeling of having to eat when hungry or having to drink when thirsty (Davis & Zhu, 2022). This could result in substance dependency, psychoactive addiction, and/or overdose of substances which can cause death.

Thrill-seeking behaviour also called sensation seeking behaviour refers to actions taken to achieve excitement and euphoria, often involving risk (Lynne-Landsman et al., 2011). This phenomenon is particularly prevalent among adolescents, who may engage in activities that are potentially dangerous. Understanding the psychological and social factors that drive this behaviour is crucial for addressing its implications. The characteristic of a thrill-seeking adolescent includes risk taking, emotional stimulation, and novelty seeking. Engaging in activities that involve physical and social risks is a hallmark of thrill seeking as showcased by many adolescents in this research. They engaged in experiences that created strong emotional response such as excitement to try illegal substances which they knew was not healthy for them. The adolescents in this research were drawn to these unfamiliar substances and had the desire to try it by all means even if it meant buying it with their pocket money.

Adolescents are known for their propensity to engage in risk taking activities, which can manifest in various forms such as substances, reckless driving or even engaging in extreme sports. Research indicates that this behaviour is often driven by a desire for excitement and the need to assert independence (Steinberg, 2010). The behaviour of risk taking is influenced by several factors which includes psychological, biological, and social elements. The adolescent brain is still developing, which can lead to impulsive decision making and a diminished ability to access the long-term consequences of their actions (Casey et al, 2008). During this stage, adolescents may find risky behaviours more appealing, as the potential for excitement and pleasure is amplified. Engaging in thrilling activities can further trigger the release of significant hormones like dopamine. This reinforces the behaviour and makes it more likely to be repeated. An adolescent who consumes substance for fun and enjoys the process and the

feeling it gives will continue the abuse because of the thrilling experience. While some risk taking can lead to positive outcomes, such as personal growth and resilience, many behaviours associated with thrill seeking can as well have detrimental effects. Engaging in substance abuse can lead to addiction, health problems, and legal issues. Additionally, risky behaviours triggered by thrill-seeking can result in accidents and injuries.

Therefore, knowledgeable of the long- and short-term dangers of these substances may avoid adolescents from trying psychoactive substances in their early years. More research needs to be carried out in relation to the ways to increase the knowledge of adolescents on the dangers of substance abuse and integrate that effort into the current education system.

5.3 EUDAIMONIC EFFORTS

The level of happiness for an adolescent is the manifestation of living a contented life (Boys et al., 2014). In the quest for living a meaningful and fulfilling life, adolescents can paradoxically be involved in substance abuse. This concept is captured by the eudaimonia terminology which involves the efforts put into living a fulfilled life and attempts to achieve personal progress. However, the challenges and forces that are affiliated with these accomplishments can lead to abnormal struggles and subsequently lead to substance abuse (Arria et al., 2018). Adolescents who engage in a lot of activities may encounter acute stage of anxiety and stress. The high level of stress and tiredness they experience may result to the abuse of substances as a coping device that help them scale through and keep them active. In the adolescent's perspective, the abuse of substances becomes a form of self-care.

Research have shown that adolescent who engage in sports are more prone to be exposed to substances (Patrick et al., 2011). Adolescents who engage in an active lifestyle most of the times participate in extracurricular or social activities like sports, partying, and subscribing members of social clubs. These increases the exposure of these adolescents to the social world and can lead to substance abuse, especially with the current high prevalence of substance abuse among Nigerian teenagers. Similar studies have confirmed that adolescents

take substances to make them feel less bored, enhance their input in any activity that they engage in, and make them feel happy when they are feeling blue (Boys et al., 2014). Boredom sometimes makes them feel the need to engage in energetic activities.

The emotions of adolescents could cause a lot of stress for them due to the various developmental challenges and body changes caused by puberty. Adolescents may experience an emotional phase characterised by teenage angst. This may come with symptoms like unexplainable stress, depression, or anger (Kalyanram, 2024). A lot of African adolescents are experiencing stress, anxiety, and depression and most of the times, it is not being recognised thus not receiving proper diagnosis and treatment. Even when treatments for mental related stress are available, they were also not affordable due to the financial state of the families (Osborn et al., 2020).

Apart from the financial problems in the family, academic stress also puts adolescents into the state of depression and anxiety (Wang et al., 2023). The pressure of this stress-related depression is usually high and more pronounced during examination periods. Unexplainable mood swings caused by stress and depression become a contributing factor for the use and abuse of substances as being observed in previous studies (Osborn et al., 2020). Adolescents that have high impulses, negative emotions, and lack discernment of consequences from their actions are prone to experimenting with psychoactive substances. Similar studies by Akinuoye et al. (2014) shows that the unexplainable academic pressure may start as early as the late childhood and early adolescent stage. This perhaps corroborated an earlier report by NDLEA that cited age at first substance abuse was nine years old. All these things can predispose them to abuse substances. Adolescents may use substances as a way to bypass the hassle of their developmental metastasis, the journey into finding their personality and achieving their long-term goal (National Institute on Drug Abuse, 2024).

Social life and peer affiliations were linked with the developmental stage of adolescence through which make adolescents accessible to experimenting substances. Adolescent's social life started to shift from family members towards their peers. They are prone to adapting to the norms of their friends in order to fit in and be accepted. As such,

adolescents tend to try out substances because they spend most of their time in the company of their peers and partners with mutual interests. Normal school hours in Nigeria are between seven to eight hours which may be followed by an extra two to three hours of after-school lessons and activities. This was a common norm for various Nigerians because the community believe that extra lessons help their children to do better in their schoolwork and the extracurricular activities help adolescents learn a trade which will be useful for them (Udokang et al., 2020). If eight to ten hours of sleep is added to the time these adolescents spend outside, there is barely enough time for family bonding except for weekends and holidays. The financial constraints may reduce the likelihood of family time may as parents needed to work extra hours. Inadvertently, some of these adolescents spent the time for their extra lessons in the company of their friends in the streets and doing things that they are not supposed to do. This was contributed by the lack of monitoring for these after-school extra lessons. Even with the presence of a tutor, some of the lesson tutors do not have a proper register to monitor their students.

Some parents were engrossed with work that they do not have time to spend with their children (Okoye, 2015). Some children are not able to see their parents every day because before they wake up, their parents have gone to work and by the time their parents are back home, adolescents were already asleep. Some adolescents spend their time with their friends on football pitches as they see this as the perfect place for fun, bonding and whiling away of time. Other places where they go to have fun are drinking joints, bars, and parties (Arute et al., 2015; Rivera et al., 2022). Often, adolescents in this study invite their peers to attend gatherings where psychoactive substances are being served. They motivate their peers to abuse substances via attending birthday parties and some even end up taking drinks that are spiked with psychoactive substances by their friends.

The encouragement from friends to abuse substances cannot be overlooked because the influence that adolescents have on each other is great (Mohasoa, 2010). This encouragement from friends can be in various forms like direct pressure, indirect persuasion or words of encouragement. Adolescents in this study reported the case of unknowingly drinking carbonated drinks which has been spiked with psychoactive substances and was offered to them by friends. Adolescents were less lonely when they are among their peers, and they feel a lot more productive when they are in the company of their friends (Tomé et al., 2012). This can

be related to the way they dress, talk, use of substances, their sexual attraction, risky behaviours and criminal tendencies. This is because friendship during the adolescent phase give room for sharing of emotions and experiences, caring for one another, and learning new things from each other depending on if it's a healthy friendship or an unhealthy one. A healthy friendship will bring out the best in the peers that are involved. Any interventions should consider a group-based approach during which the adolescents are given the opportunity to bond with each other.

5.4 ECOSYSTEM

Environmental forces were a contributing factor when considering the motives behind substance abuse among adolescents. One of these environmental forces is the availability of the substances to these adolescents. Availability of the substance may exert effect beyond abuse and includes selling the substance to their peers. In many homes and communities in Nigeria, psychoactive substances were easy to get, this has reduced the hindrances for adolescent to take substances whenever and wherever they want. Native vendors, unrestrained marketers, including relatives and peers are all sources of procuring these substances. In fact, similar studies by Dumbili (2015) showed that the law that controls the immoderate manufacturing, uncontrolled sales, excessive purchase, and the unlimited use of alcoholic substances in Nigeria were not being enforced. There is a cogent void in the enforcement of regulations towards the distribution of substances and the vending of it to adolescents. The lack of enforcement has allowed adolescents easy access to these substances. As such, the government's policy preventing people younger than 18 years from buying alcoholic substances does not stop adolescents from buying and abusing these substances if the vendor was not compliant to the policy (Dumbili, 2013).

The implementation and enforcement of policies as regards to substances are immensely beneficial to health, social, and economic outcomes. Enforcement of policies will significantly reduce the accessibility of substances to the adolescents. Sellers will not be able to sell substances to minors and this will reduce the likelihood of substance abuse among adolescents. Adolescents who abuse substances at an early age are vulnerable to long-term health effects such as addiction, mental disorders, and physical health sicknesses. Reducing the likelihood of substance abuse by curbing accessibility through implementation and

enforcement of policies may prevent such negative outcomes (National Institute on Drug Abuse, 2018). One of the social benefits of enforcing policies against substance abuse was the reduction of crime rate. Substance abuse and crime was shown to be significantly correlated (National Institute of Justice, 2019). Studies on crime have shown that certain crime such as rape, assault, and theft were often done under the influence of substances or motivated by the need to procure substances (Zinyama, 2019). Substance abuse related crimes can be reduced if policies against psychoactive substances are being enforced.

Benefits of such enforcement have been reported in China and the USA. The reduction in newly registered drug users in five consecutive years have led to significant reduction in drug trafficking and substance-related crimes in China (Wang et al., 2023). The Breaking the Cycle project in the USA that aimed to break the cycle of substance use and criminal offense showed significant reduction in substance abuse and criminal offense, and improved the abuser's social competencies (Walters, 2023). The two studies, in combination, demonstrated the benefits of enforcement on reducing the prevalence of substance-related crimes and its potential preventive effect through cultivating social connectedness. This will bring about a lot of peace and orderliness in various communities and in the country at large.

Economically, enforcement of substance-related laws may also provide the benefits of cost-savings for the country. The enforcement of these policies can lead to reduced expenditures on the enforcement of criminal law and the judicial system since drug-related crimes were being curtailed. It was estimated that the judicial system spent approximately more than USD 4.2 million per year to maintain and sustain prison and their inmates (Abdulkarim, 2012). The cost has recently increased to approximately more than USD 13.4 million in the year 2023 (International Center for Investigative Reporting, 2023). Therefore, a reduction in substance-related crimes may reduce the economic burden of Nigeria and use the monetary resources to develop a better education system. Healthcare cost will also be diminished and brought to a lower rate (Kugbey, 2023).

These policies will bring about reduction in the burden which the healthcare systems need to carry due to lower costs of expenditure on substance related illnesses. Substance abuse

is a major risk factor when it comes to diseases like liver disease, respiratory illnesses and also cardiovascular diseases (National Institute on Drug Abuse, 2023). If these illnesses have been brought to the minimum, there will be increased productivity as adolescents can contribute positively to the advancement of the country. Policy changes and community interventions like prevention programs which includes school-based and community based initiatives, and public awareness campaigns are some approach that are recommended. Implementing and enforcing regulations to control the availability of addictive substances which could include increment in tax rates on psychoactive products like alcohol. In addition to this, the introduction of prescription monitoring programs to track and keep in check the prescription and dispensing of drugs to fight against the abuse of prescription medications (Health Policy Institute, 2023).

In order to overcome the lack of policy enforcement on substance abuse among adolescents, policymakers need to launch a multifaceted approach which involves community-led grassroots movements and initiatives. This can start with building awareness and momentum for the change in policies and the impact of these substances onto adolescents. Non-governmental organisations can also play important roles in advocating for a change. This can be done by raising awareness among community members, launching public health campaigns and conducting research which will further expose the effects of substance abuse and how to curtail it. Community members can be empowered to report any establishment that sell substances to adolescents. Such community empowerment initiatives have been implemented in countries such as Thailand, United States of America, Hong Kong and Australia (United Nations, 2023; United States Drug Enforcement Administration, 2024).

The financial ability and inability of various families was also an environmental force which could be a tributary causative to the abuse of substances among adolescents. Poverty was the main cause of reduced parental supervision and poor interaction among family members (Ola et al., 2006). Lack of parental supervision in the lives of these adolescents is a strong predictor linked with the higher rate of substance abuse among adolescents in Nigeria (Oshodi et al., 2010). Many Nigerian parents experience economic hardship which put pressures on them to work for many hours which reduces the time and attention they give to their children. Parents in low-income households were engrossed in jobs that kept them away from their children for a long period of time (Nwobodo, 2021). During this period, parents

were unable to monitor and guide their adolescents which predispose adolescents to make the wrong decisions or take advice from the wrong people or peers. These children do whatever they want when their parents are away.

The financial stresses may also influence both parents and children to be involved in various illegal means of getting funds to facilitate their survival. This was captured in this study as some of these adolescents get involved in cybercrimes, peddle substances, and complete menial or illegal jobs for criminals. Additionally, some parents of these adolescents sell psychoactive substances as part of the family business and was assisted by their adolescents. Hence, it was not surprising to observe this finding corroborated that poor family background was associated with early exposure and subsequently substance abuse (Manhica et al., 2021). A report by United Nation also reaffirmed high prevalence of substance abuse within poverty-stricken communities in Nigeria (Jatau et al., 2021). The adolescents in these areas were prone to abuse substances as they peddle psychoactive substances in order to earn extra cash coupled with the lack of adolescent friendly facilities like recreational centres, community resources and support systems.

This study also reported the unfortunate parental direct influence on adolescent's use of substance. Parental substance uses and the negligence of parents towards the storage these substances within the house contributed to the adolescents' substance abuse. Adolescents whose parents use substances were more likely to use them because many of them do not store these substances away from the reach of minors in the home. Some of them would also go as far as giving these substances to their children for one reason or the other. This modelling behaviour makes these adolescents see the use of substances as a normal behaviour and acceptable. Most adolescents from this research reported that they were given their precursor substance by an older family member, either by a father, mother, brother, or uncle. This was similar to a study that showed children whose parents abuse substances were more likely to abuse substances as well (Yang et al., 2023). Engaging parents in the efforts put in place to fight against adolescent psychoactive use will create a strong support system for adolescents. Such program which involves parents will enable the adolescent to understand that they are not alone and have supportive parents who will always look out for them.

According to Dumbili (2013), alcohol consumption in Nigeria has a long-standing tradition, particularly among ethnic groups where it is not prohibited by religion. Certain traditional practices and ceremonies involves the use and consumption of substances like alcohol and palm wine. These practices manifested the use of substances as part of the cultural heritage of the people (Oshodi et al., 2010). These ceremonies and rites can make adolescents vulnerable to substance use at an early age. The use of substances in rituals related to passage of age, funeral, or marriage were common within the African continent (Olupona, 2014). However, contrary to the belief of Western cultures, the role of substances within these rituals were “spiritual” and “communal”. The use of substance was part of the effort to improve the state of spiritual and social health (Lott-Schwartz, 2019). Substances used were obtained from natural sources and consumed within dosage that were inherited from older generations. An example of these cultural rituals, festivals and rites that involves the use of psychoactive substances are masquerade festivals, burial rituals, new yam festival, marriage rites, child naming (Ekeke & John, 2023). Unfortunately, the rituals became an introductory avenue towards substance abuse. The introduction of synthetic substances coupled with the inherent urge to innovate perhaps resulted in the behaviour described in this study. The purpose of substance use was taken out of their cultural and spiritual context and resulted in increasing prevalence of substance abuse.

These uses of substances have been an important item among Nigerian tradition and culture. Consumption and use of alcoholic substances were being used for prayers in marriage ceremonies and burial rites by the traditional priests to appease the gods and the ancestors of the land whom the people believe are still alive and live among them. Those who belong to families of traditional priests cannot avoid the heavy consumption of alcohol as they need to constantly use it for one reason or the other. Even though the Islamic religion strictly forbid the use of alcohol, yet alcoholism has been a problem even among students in Islamic religious schools. Experts have blamed on the availability and accessibility of the substances towards the consumption of alcohol among Muslim adolescents (Ekeke & John, 2023).

Additionally, some traditions endorse the use of these substances for native medicines or spiritual purposes. Adolescents in this study were exposed to substances under the guise of traditional healing purposes (Ekeke & John, 2023) or unavoidable rituals which overtime led

to potential and recreational abuse of substances. A lot of Nigerians have been in this same situation because the consumption of *opaeyin*, *paraga*, and many other alcoholic bitters being sold under the guise of its healing properties. Umejiaku et al. (2023) revealed that some cultural norms encouraged the use of substances to show maturity or masculinity. This traditional rite is still being carried out in some African cultures where some male adolescents are made to consume alcohol and kola nuts in order for them to show that they are strong, and they have become men. Some Nigerian cultures involved and tolerated the use of intoxicants to demonstrate specific gender expectations without considering the age of the parties involved. Adolescents in this study backed this up as many of them are taking substances to prove to their peers that they are matured.

The use of alcoholic substances has massive value to the culture and tradition of some ethnic groups in Nigeria. Numerous brands of alcoholic bitters are in production by legal and illegal manufacturers and are being released into the market (Ibraheem & Adigun, 2018). This increase in the production of psychoactive drinks have led to the purchase of these psychoactive products by both young and old. This shows that cultural expectations in fulfilling societal roles can expose adolescents to substance use. Other forms of masculinity expectation can be promoted to the adolescents.

The psychological, social, and cultural meaning of substance abuse to adolescents in this study explains the motives behind the abuse of substances among adolescents. The psychological motives were covered in the hedonic pursuits and eudaimonic efforts. Whereas the social motives were covered by some of the subthemes of eudaimonic efforts and ecosystem. The cultural aspect was captured mostly by the subthemes of ecosystem. These motives can be used to design culturally- and developmentally appropriate interventions that collaborated with various stakeholders.

5.5 LIMITATION AND RECOMMENDATION FOR INTERVENTION AND FUTURE RESEARCH

This study employed pure qualitative approach that focus on two educational institutions in just one local government within Lagos, Nigeria. The findings may not be sufficient to generalise to the population in Lagos or the state of Nigeria. Future research should replicate this research onto different educational institutions and localities to build stronger base of evidence on the motives for substance abuse among adolescents.

Snowball sampling can introduce several biases in qualitative research on adolescent substance abuse. Participants tend to refer others who are similar to themselves, leading to a homogeneous sample that may not represent the broader adolescent population. The social circles that respondents belong in can skew the sample, as those within the same network often share similar experiences and behaviours. The less socially connected adolescents may be underrepresented, resulting in an incomplete picture. This is the reason why apart from the in-depth interview, focused group discussion was carried out with the respondents to ensure triangulation of the data collected. For future research, to overcome biases which are associated with snowball sampling on research akin to this, researcher should consider the combination of snowball sampling with other methods, such as purposive or stratified sampling, to ensure a more diverse and representative sample.

The specific criteria for selecting participants in stratified sampling technique would be based on relevant characteristics like age, gender, socioeconomic status, and type of substance used. This will ensure that the sample includes diverse perspectives and experiences thereby reducing the risk of homogeneity. Dividing the study population into groups based on ethnicity, level of substance use or religion and sampling from each group would as well ensure representation from all the groups allowing a more comprehensive data. To use purposive sampling, the researcher will intentionally select participants based on specific experiences. For instance, the researcher can select adolescents in recovery, who had history of substance abuse to provide the in-depth into the experience and the challenges faced by each participant in these groups. In addition to this, the researcher can also collaborate with community

organizations, schools, and support groups to identify and recruit respondents from various backgrounds.

Educational activities should consider integrating elements of curiosity and thrill-seeking to retain focus of adolescents towards beneficial activities. Such an approach would appreciate the natural tendency of adolescents and more appealing to them. For example, scientific experiments especially involving physics has the potential to incite curiosity in adolescents. The visual changes and impact of the experiment will make adolescents curious to the mechanism it occurs. The availability of school counsellors and mental health professionals to identify and take care of underlying issues of stress, trauma or peer pressure should be provided in schools. Screening programs to identify at risk adolescents and help them with the necessary support and intervention will assist adolescents with coping with emotional and mental stress and will also enable them to be able to withstand pressures that may arise during their teenage phase. Schools should include orientation on substance abuse and its effects on children in their meeting agenda when meeting with the parents and guardians of the students.

Government should engage services of or employ developmental psychologists to devise co-curricular activities that address the motives discovered in this study. The activities should be tailored toward the interest of the adolescents in order to retain and enhance their curiosity. The government should introduce science DIY projects and competitions, talent hunt and shows, field trips and explorations, educational parties and clubs into the school curriculums and educational activities. Activities like this will address the need for fun and improve the curiosity of adolescents. Government should enforce and strengthen laws and regulations that limit the availability of substances to adolescents and implement stricter control measures on the sale of substances. They government should encourage community members to anonymously report any information about drug dealers and illicit drug activities that may be going on around them. This will help the community members know the importance of living a substance free lifestyle and raising their children in a clean and safe environment. The community members will develop a sense of ownership toward the efforts of keeping their adolescent's substance free. The government will also improve their efficiency in enforcing such laws.

Media houses can explore and work with companies to organise workshops and seminars that educate both adolescents and their guardians on the risks associated with substance abuse and the importance of early prevention. Programs like *cowbellpedia*, *talent hunt*, and *maltina dance all* can be organised so that both parents and adolescents will be able to showcase their way of living a substance free lifestyle. Media houses should support the advocacy for stricter regulations to be put in place against the sales of substances to minors by spreading the awareness about the dangers of substance use and how to promote a healthy lifestyle. The Nigerian media should regulate the advertisements of these substances to spread awareness about substance abuse and control the use of substances among adolescents. The Nigerian media should be rewarded for their endorsement in these initiative through awards, endorsements from the government, and tax reduction benefits for media houses that complies. This will serve as a motivation for other media houses.

Parents should be open to conversations about substance abuse with their children at an early age, discussing the dangers of substance use and encourage the children to share their thoughts and feelings without judging them. Parents should also lead by example by avoiding substances and engaging in regular physical activities, and practice healthy eating, this will encourage the children to live a healthy lifestyle. They should also try to monitor their child's activities by trying to know their friends, be aware of where their child goes. This will encourage healthy peer relationships.

Communities should establish monitored spaces for adolescents' recreational, educational, and vocational activities. Communities should advocate the use of town halls for such activities and revive the involvement of celebrities and performing arts professionals. They can shift their presence online to physical involvement at the town halls. Benefits from a face-to-face interaction will be more meaningful and interesting to the adolescents. Mentorship programs involving community leaders should be put in place to empower them in organising town hall events and other activities involving adolescents. Religious organisations should include the awareness against substance abuse in their religious and cultural activities and cut out cultural norms that encourage substance use and abuse.

5.6 CONCLUSION

It is of great significance to notate the constant revamping of various substances among adolescents and the modification of the abuse habit which has caused a cyclical advancement in the style and genres of substances among the Nigerian populace and in particular among the adolescents. The abuse of alcohol as the most abused substance by adolescent, followed by palm wine showed that there is no adequate enforcement of law that prevents adolescents from purchasing, possessing and using these substances. This research has bequeathed the vital clue needed on the types of substances that is being abused, the pattern by which it is being abused, and the problem being caused by these substances.

All parents, children, and most especially adolescents need to be properly informed about the dangers of substance abuse. Awareness lectures and programs that exposes the dangers of substance abuse should be introduced in schools and also during parents- teachers meeting. There is need for the involvement of all parents and family members in the fight against substance abuse among adolescents because most parents contributed to the abuse habit among their children. Additionally, this study is an eye opener to the various Nigerian community on the urgent need to combat the problem of substance abuse among the young ones to ensure that they have a healthy and brighter future for the betterment of the nation. In conclusion, the government should make sure that all schools absorb academic activities with therapeutic effect that will improve the confidence of every child mentally and emotionally, make them disciplined and help them avoid future exposure to any form of substance abuse.

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APPENDIX 1: SAMPLE PERMISSION LETTER

Researcher's address,
Date

School address

Dear sir/ma

REQUEST TO CONDUCT RESEARCH IN YOUR SCHOOL

My name is OBASOGIE TOBILOBA PRISCILLA | Department of Biomedical Sciences | Kulliyah of Allied Health Sciences, International Islamic University, Malaysia. I wish to conduct the research for completion of my Masters dissertation in this school, it involves Exploring Motives of Substance Abuse among Adolescents in Lagos State, Nigeria.

This study will be conducted under the supervision of DR. MOHD NAZIR BIN MOHD NAZORI, Department of Physical Rehabilitation Sciences | Kulliyah of Allied Health Sciences and Co-Supervisor DR. NURULWAHIDA BINTI SAAD Department of Biomedical sciences | Kulliyah of Allied Health Sciences.

I hereby seek for your consent to carry out this research for the betterment of all children and the whole world at large.

Yours faithfully,

Obasogie Tobiloba Priscilla.

APPENDIX 2: SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

INTERVIEW GUIDE

Serial number: _____

Please fill in the appropriate information

Sex: Male/Female

Class: Junior Secondary School / Senior Secondary School

Age: _____

Religion: _____

How many children do your parents have? _____

Who do you live with? Both parents / Father only / Mother only / Relatives / Guardian

SECTION A

Objective: To identify the common substances that adolescents abuse and ways to obtain the drug.

1. Which of these substances have you heard of?

*Interviewer prompt (if needed): Alcohol/ cigarette/ tramadol/ Marijuana/ Beer/ Cocaine/
Heroin/ red wine/ Palm wine*

2. Which of these substances have you seen?

*Interviewer prompt (if needed): Alcohol/ cigarette/ tramadol/ Marijuana/ Beer/ Cocaine/
Heroin/ red wine/ Palm wine*

3. Which of these substances have you tried?

*Interviewer prompt (if needed): Alcohol/ cigarette/ tramadol/ Marijuana/ Beer/ Cocaine/
Heroin/ red wine/ Palm wine*

4. What other substances have you tried and are not in the list?

5. How do you get/buy the substance(s) friends/ family/ pharmacy/ street seller/ Others:

SECTION B

Objective: To describe the psycho-socio-cultural meaning of drug abuse to adolescents in Nigeria.

Ice-breaking questions:

1. At what age did you try your first substance? _____
2. What was your first substance? _____
3. How often do you take these substance(s)? *Always/ Everyday/ Few days in a week/ occasionally*
4. Who introduced you to substances? *Family member/ Friends/ Social Media/ Curiosity/ Others:*

5. Which of your family member aware that you your take substances? *Father/ Mother/ Brother/ Sister/ Extended family/ None*
Others _____
6. What is their reaction to finding out that you take these substances?

Main questions:

7. Why do you take these substances? *Interviewer prompt (if needed): For fun/ for boldness/ for strength/ Medical reasons/ other reasons:*

8. Is there any time you have influenced your friend to use this substance, what was your reason for doing that?

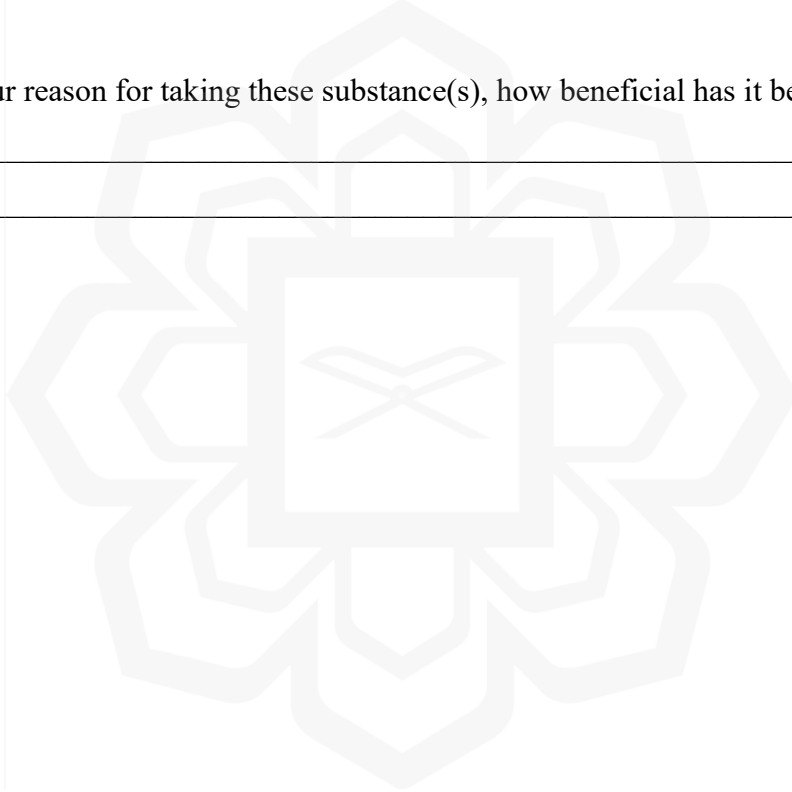
SECTION C

Objective: To reflect on the abuse behaviour in achieving the intended outcome.

1. How do you feel when you take the substance?

2. How do you feel when you don't take the substance?

3. Based on your reason for taking these substance(s), how beneficial has it been for you?



APPENDIX 3: COREQ CHECKLIST

Item No	Guide Questions/Description	Reported on Page #
Domain 1: Research team and reflexivity		
Personal Characteristics		
1. Interviewer/facilitator	Which author/s conducted the interview or focus group?	Page 48
2. Credentials	What were the researcher’s credentials? E.g., PhD, MD	Page 48
3. Occupation	What was their occupation at the time of the study?	Page 48
4. Gender	Was the researcher male or female?	Page 48
5. Experience and training	What experience or training did the researcher have?	Page 48
Relationship with participants		
6. Relationship established	Was a relationship established prior to study commencement?	Page 48
7. Participant knowledge of the interviewer	What did the participants know about the researcher? e.g. personal goals, reasons for doing the research?	Page 48
8. Interviewer characteristics	What characteristics were reported about the interviewer/facilitator? e.g. Bias, assumptions, reasons and interests in the research topic	Page 48
Domain 2: Study design		
Theoretical framework		
9. Methodological orientation and Theory	What methodological orientation was stated to underpin the study? e.g. grounded theory, discourse analysis, ethnography, phenomenology, content analysis	Page 45
Participant selection		
10. Sampling	How were participants selected? e.g., purposive, convenience, consecutive, snowball	Page 47
11. Method of approach	How were participants approached? e.g., face-to-face, telephone, mail, email	Page 47
12. Sample size	How many participants were in the study?	Page 48
13. Non-participation Setting	How many people refused to participate or dropped out? Reasons?	Page 48
14. Setting of data collection	Where was the data collected? e.g., home, clinic, workplace	Page 47
15. Presence of nonparticipants	Was anyone else present besides the participants and researchers?	Page 47
16. Description of sample	What are the important characteristics of the sample? e.g. demographic data, date	Page 46
Data collection		
17. Interview guide	Were questions, prompts, and guides provided by the authors? Was it pilot tested?	Page 49
18. Repeat interviews	Were repeat interviews carried out? If yes, how many?	Page 48
19. Audio/visual recording	Did the research use audio or visual recording to collect the data?	Page 47
20. Field notes	Were field notes made during and/or after the interview or focus group?	Page.47
21. Duration	What was the duration of the interviews or focus group?	Page 32
22. Data saturation	Was data saturation discussed?	Page 48

Item No	Guide Questions/Description	Reported on Page #
23. Transcripts returned	Were transcripts returned to participants for comment and/or correction?	Page 32
Domain 3: Analysis and findings		
Data analysis		
24. Number of data coders	How many data coders coded the data?	Page 34
25. Description of the coding tree	Did the authors provide a description of the coding tree?	Page 34
26. Derivation of themes	Were themes identified in advance or derived from the data?	Page 49
27. Software	What software, if applicable, was used to manage the data?	Page 49
28. Participant checking	Did participants provide feedback on the findings?	Page 32
Reporting		
29. Quotations presented	Were participant quotations presented to illustrate the themes/findings? Was each quotation identified? e.g., participant number	Page 53 -64
30. Data and findings consistent	Was there consistency between the data presented and the findings?	Page 53 - 64
31. Clarity of major themes	Were major themes clearly presented in the findings?	Page 53 - 64
32. Clarity of minor themes	Is there a description of diverse cases or a discussion of minor themes?	Page 53 - 64

APPENDIX 4: APPROVAL TO CONDUCT RESEARCH

APPROVAL TO CONDUCT RESEARCH

I ODEDOLUA HETHZIGAN on behalf of our school ROYAL SCEPTRE ACADEMY hereby approve the request to conduct research on our facility.

The researcher Tobiloba Priscilla Obasogie may attend to our facility to conduct the research from 01/02 /2024 to 31/08/2024. All information should be kept confidential as agreed without any harm to the facility and the students.

Signature

Stamp

Date

